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THE CONNOISSEUR PERIOD GUIDES

The Late Georgian Period

The Connoisseur Period Guides

to the Houses, Decoration, Furnishing and Chattels of the Classic Periods

Edited by Ralph Edwards & L. G. G. Ramsey

The Tudor Period
1500—1603

The Stuart Period
1603—1714

The Early Georgian Period
1714—1760

The Late Georgian Period
1760—1810

The Regency Period
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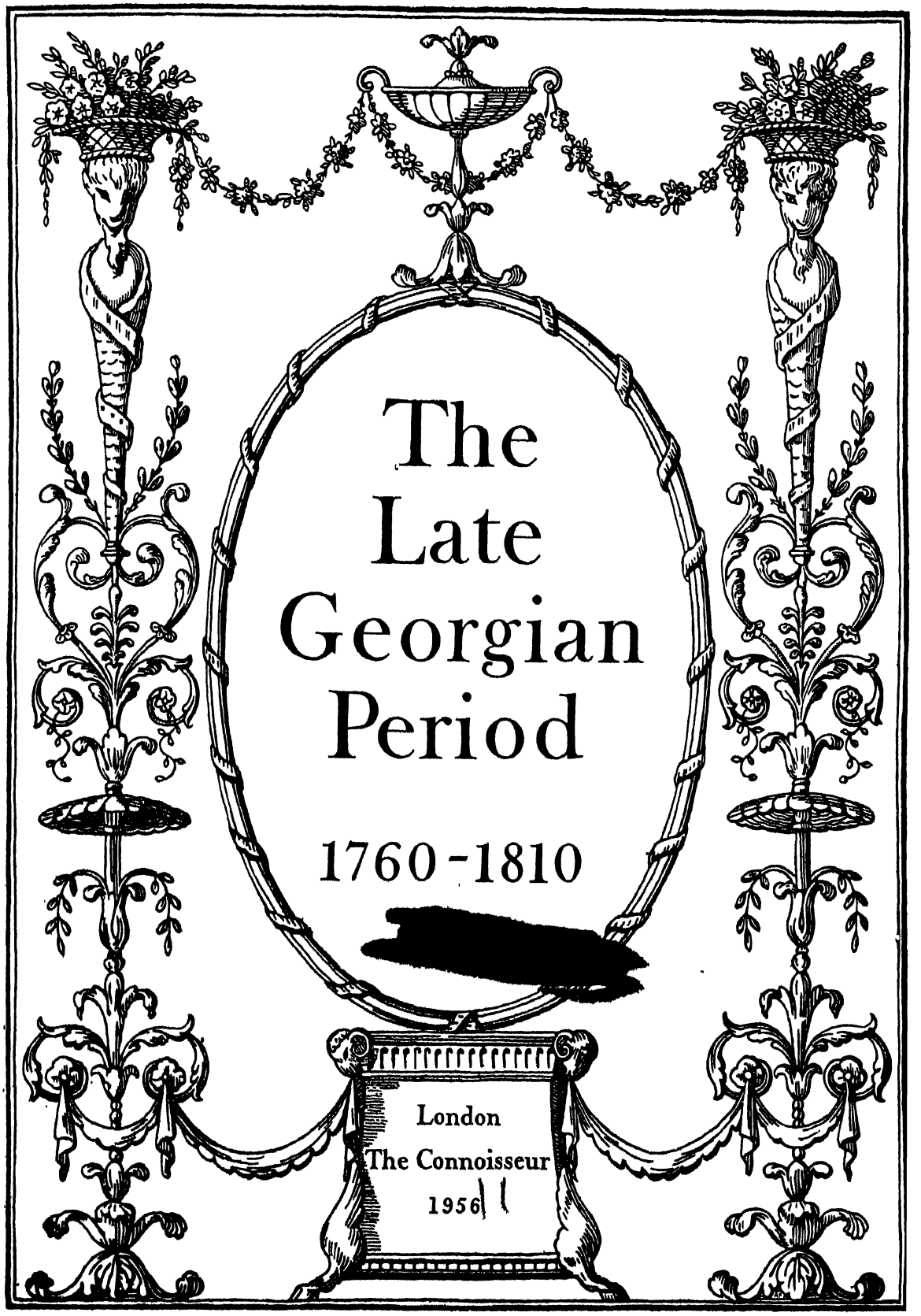
1830—1860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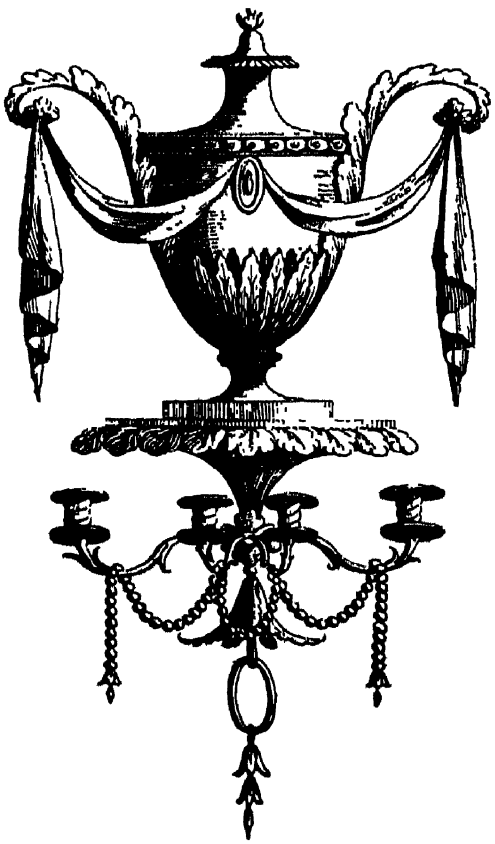

Girandole from Hepplewhite's *The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Guide*, 1789.

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Foreword

L. G. G. RAMSEY

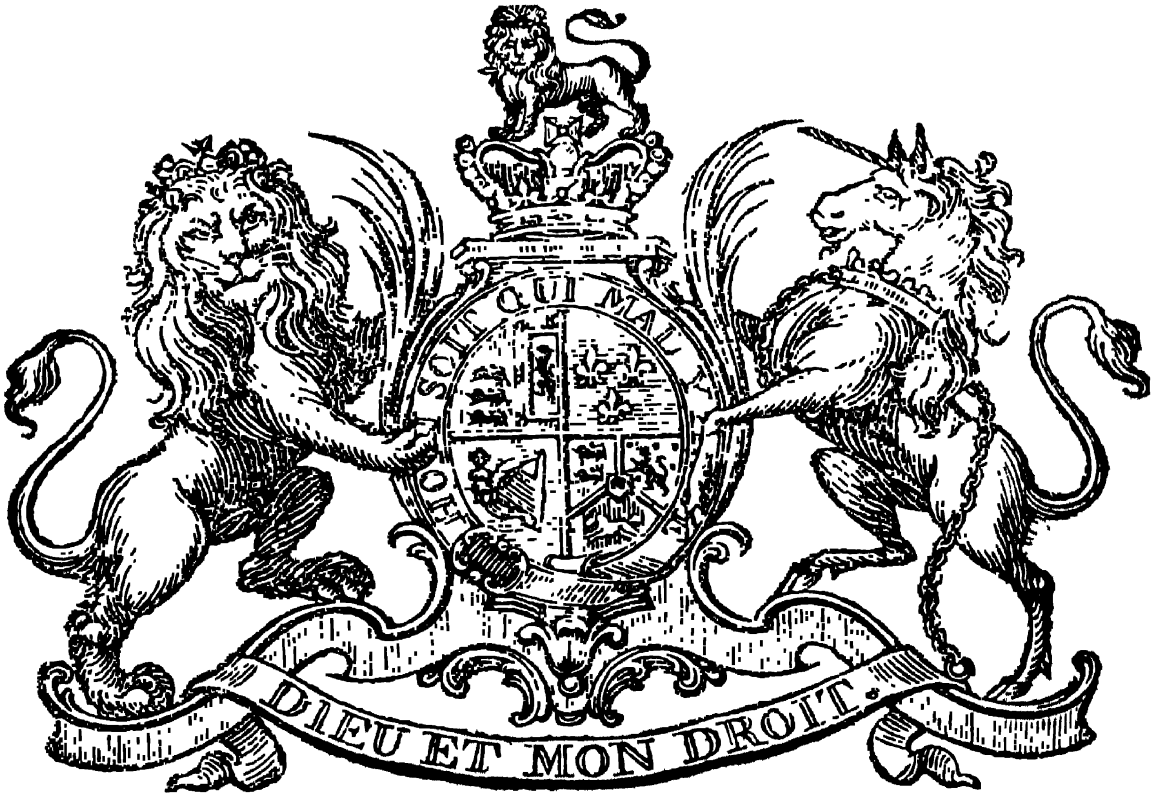
In his Foreword to the first volume (*The Tudor Period*) in this unique series of *Connoisseur Period Guides* Mr Ralph Edwards has already referred to the fact that the arts of any period constitute a unity or synthesis and that they should be studied together, thereby enhancing their understanding and appreciation. This series of *Guides* enables precisely this cultural, conjunctional process to be effected. For this reason it will be clear to those who acquire this and the other volumes in the series why their composition and presentation are now labelled unique.

Possibly one of the most refreshing aspects of the idea which first led to the preparation of these books is that they treat with all the people of England, the events which stirred, or which contributed to, their daily lives, particularly in the domestic field, their arts and crafts, music, costume, and so on, in an altogether unusual way. Not only do we learn of how, in the special period to which this volume is devoted, the country houses of peer and gentleman were the nurseries of national culture and tradition and how, until the French Wars broke the tradition after the turn of the century, the Grand Tour widened the cultural horizon of the English ruling class, but we are given an absorbing insight – and this is both important and factually interesting – into the homes and economics of the humble, less pretentious men and women who invariably reflect the essential qualities of any nation. In this the English have probably as fascinating a history to tell as any other peoples of the world.

In short, whilst one chapter in particular which follows gives the historical background to the period, and the political and economic conditions prevailing, it will be apparent that the other chapters largely concern themselves with that indispensable, individual background to all ways of life – the social history behind the development and change of the habits and pastimes of a people, and the reasons for those changes.

Those who have contributed their scholarship and research to this volume – and there is new knowledge to be found on a good many of its pages – have been fortunate in so doing. They have been engaged in recording a long and happy period, a great 'Age of Collections': a period when, for example, the London *Connoisseur*, in 1774, was reporting that it was expedient for those ladies 'who are apt to be hysterical when the Town empties, to prepare for their removal to *Tunbridge*, *Cheltenham*, *Bath* and *Scarborough*, for the Benefit of the Waters'; when 'a great branch Candle Stick' (from a chandelier) fell down over Lady Holland, narrowly missing her head. It is well, also, to appreciate the conditions which existed for an unmarried clerk, of a 'middling station', living in London in a furnished room rented at half a crown a week in 1767. There was no delicate furniture, decorated with classical motifs for him, but 'a half tester bedstead, with brown linsey woolsey furniture, a bed and bolster, half flock, half feathers . . . a red linsey woolsey window curtain'.

In all this, social history is interwoven to an engrossing degree: and who could be more highly qualified to define this side of a nation's life than Dr G. M. Trevelyan? 'Without social history economic history is barren and political history is unintelligible.' These *Guides* pay regard to this wisdom.



Coat of Arms of George III, from William Caslon's Type Specimen of 1785.

The Age of George III

John Wilkes, from the engraving by Hogarth, 1763.

The Age of George III

IAN R. CHRISTIE

The year 1760, in which George III succeeded to the throne of his grandfather, marks no particular landmark in British history. A young, conservative-minded personality had become head of the state, a new factor in its politics: but the broad flood-tide of the nation's exuberant life swept on unchecked and undeflected. By this date Great Britain was firmly set, with slow but gathering momentum, on far-reaching lines of development and change. Signal progress was achieved in the next sixty years. Up to within a few years of George III's accession, the country was, internally, a land of stable population, predominantly agricultural in its economy though with an enterprising and gradually expanding industry; and, externally, one – and not clearly the strongest – of a group of west European states reaching out in competition with each other towards the heritage of world trade and empire. Very different was the scene at the close of the reign in 1820. By then, the mode of living and the resources of Britain's mounting population were being transformed by the great advances in transport and industry commonly described as the Industrial Revolution. And the successful conclusion of the wars against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France left her indisputable mistress of the seas with unrivalled opportunities for trade and imperial expansion.

The sinews of power

Its people is the heart of a nation's strength. When, soon after the turn of the century, the statistician, John Rickman, began to analyse the figures available in the early census returns and in other sources, contemporaries were amazed to find that the number of the people had increased by nearly half since the King's accession and was still increasing. During most of the first half of the eighteenth century, the population of England and Wales had been fairly stable. But from about 1750 an upward trend began. In 1760, at the accession of George III, the people numbered some six million and a half. By the time of the first census in 1801, the figure was about nine million, and each decennial census thereafter disclosed a population mounting ever higher. In the period 1760–70 the rate of increase was about 7 per cent; for the last decade of the reign, after 1811, it rose to the remarkable level of over 16 per cent. Scotland showed a similar trend, and in Ireland the rate of increase was even higher.

No simple explanation can be given for this remarkable expansion in numbers. It may be attributed with varying degrees of certainty to several factors. Agricultural improvement – of which more below – probably played a considerable part, by making a better variety and quality of food available and by removing the check of periodic famine. Fresh vegetables were more abundant – the potato was the basis of Irish prolificity, and it formed an increasing part of the diet of the English peasantry though they never became so completely dependent upon it. Stock-rearing with the aid of root-crops for winter feed made it possible to vary diet with fresh meat in the winter months and may also have made more milk available. The development of regional economies, based upon better transport facilities and involving

as one consequence a greater mobility of labour, may have evened out the local disparities in the numbers of the sexes to be found from one village to the next, and so have increased the rate of marriage. The extent of the grants of poor relief was thought to encourage early marriages. Of more importance, perhaps, than any save the first of these factors, was the growing attention paid to health, with its startling effect upon the death rate and more especially on infant mortality. About the middle of the eighteenth century seventy-five out of every hundred children died at birth or before their sixth year: by its end the rate had fallen to 41 per cent. If medicine had made no startling technical advances during most of this period, at least its practitioners had grasped the all-importance of cleanliness and fresh air in combating disease; and their knowledge was used and spread abroad by the hospitals which had been founded both in London and the provinces during the earlier years of the century. At the century's end a great technical advance was at last achieved: Edward Jenner's discovery of vaccination, a powerful new weapon in the battle against smallpox – hitherto a terrible scourge, especially to children – was thought by contemporaries to have contributed greatly to the rapid increase in population. As each additional child saved was a potential parent, the effect on the rate of population increase was cumulative, until, at the very end of the reign, counteracting tendencies to check the marriage and birth rates began to make their appearance.

Some eighteenth-century writers had expressed fears lest Britain's power might fail for want of numbers. Such an idea, which had in any case never been widely accepted, was entirely dispelled by the first census taken in 1801. On the contrary, it was clear that the country's human resources were on the upgrade, and that youth, with its vigour, exuberance, enterprise and eager response to novelty and change, formed an increasing proportion of them. Measured in terms of the age of her population, Britain in the early nineteenth century was a country of youth: here lay part of the secret of her strength, in war and in peace.

Another part of this strength lay in her command of natural resources: to this advancements in agriculture, transport and industry all contributed in plenteous measure.

The demand of a growing population for more food was the main stimulus to agricultural improvement: indeed, from 1793, after the commencement of the great war against Revolutionary France, this became a matter of official concern, which led to the creation of the advisory Board of Agriculture. In the enclosure of waste and common land, the marling of light soils, the use of crop rotations, and the improvement of breeds of cattle and sheep, the men of George III's reign were less inventors or originators than followers of lines of advance already marked out by pioneers in the earlier part of the century, but their zeal and enterprise made an indispensable contribution to the nation's prosperity. To quote but one name: Thomas William Coke, of Holkham, pursued experiments which turned his native county of Norfolk into one of the granaries of England. Information about new farming methods was constantly circulated. Coke himself turned his annual sheep-shearings into agricultural conferences attended by farming enthusiasts from every part of the country: these meetings even achieved an international fame. By the medium of books and pamphlets Arthur Young won brilliant success as a popularizer of agricultural science, publicizing the latest results of observations and experiments which he culled on his journeys across the length and breadth of England. Through the enterprise of the landed aristocracy and gentry, agricultural production virtually kept pace with population throughout the reign.

Road and water transport were vastly improved. By the middle of the century much attention was being paid to the country's roads, and numerous turnpike trusts were established for this purpose. But better roads could not meet the needs of industry. They facilitated an increasing long distance traffic mainly of passengers and of goods of small bulk and high value, but for most purposes the cost of moving bulky and heavy goods, upon which tolls had to be paid every few miles, made this mode of conveyance unduly expensive. So, almost simultaneously with the beginning of the

reign, the demands of commerce and industry for cheaper transport facilities set going the great canal boom of the later eighteenth century, of which the wealthy Duke of Bridgwater and his brilliant engineer, James Brindley, were the pioneers. Within a few years, cheaper, quicker transport by the new canals gave an enormous stimulus to industrial development.

The year 1760 is no longer considered as marking the commencement of an 'Industrial Revolution'. The developments in industry which took place in the reign of George III followed naturally from those which had occurred earlier in the century: at the most there was a quickening of pace, technical advances following more rapidly one upon another and reacting over wider spheres of industrial activity. Development was uneven, and some industries forged ahead far faster than others, cotton and iron making the most rapid advances. Like children captivated by a new toy, the industrial entrepreneurs were elated and enthralled at the new powers which inventions were bestowing upon them – witness, for instance, John Wilkinson, whose fanatical interest in the uses to which abundant supplies of iron might be put went so far as directing that he should be buried in an iron coffin, who built the first iron bridge in 1779, experimented with iron-built lighters for inland navigation, and supplied forty miles of cast iron piping for the water supply of Paris. The importance of James Watt's invention of the steam engine has always been singled out in popular imagination; and before the end of the reign the advantages of this revolutionary contrivance, both for pumping out mines and as a source of motive power for machines in factories, were clearly apparent over large sections of the field of industry. New machines and new processes quickened the pace of industrial output. Really dramatic results only began to show in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. In so far as what is meant by the 'Industrial Revolution' was a sudden quickening of the rate of production, the turning point came about 1780, towards the close of the American War of Independence. If the figures for imports and exports in the peace-decade 1764–73 are taken as a starting point, comparison shows that trade fell off slightly in the next decennium, during most of which the American War was dislocating commerce and diverting the nation's energies. But in the next peace-decade, 1784–93, the value of imports and exports was between a fifth and a quarter higher than in the years 1764–73, and each year showed an upward movement, which continued through the war period after 1793.

Industrial development brought changes in the way of life of many of the common people, but generalization about whether these changes were for better or for worse is almost impossible. One feature of the period which greatly struck contemporaries was the crowding together of workpeople in factories. This was not a new phenomenon; nor, on the other hand, was it nearly so widespread as later in the nineteenth century: but with the expansion of industry it became more common. Conditions in factories were often undoubtedly bad, but it is questionable whether they were worse, or the hours of labour longer, than hours and conditions in domestic industry. Probably the most hateful feature of factory life was its compulsory uniformity and strict discipline: there was also social prejudice against it, grounded upon a terminological confusion of the poor-law workhouse with the factory and upon the fact that factory labour was recruited largely from among tramps and paupers, the least reputable flotsam and jetsam of society. Nevertheless, factory life offered the attraction of wages which, so far as one can generalize from the information available, seem to have been on the whole rather better than those obtainable in domestic industry and clearly higher than wages in agriculture. Apart from the disruptive effect of the business cycle, much of the social distress which was to be revealed by both private and public enquiry in the years after the close of the Napoleonic wars was due less to the new industrial developments than to the economic dislocation produced by war and then by readjustment to peace conditions.

As the population grew and was attracted to centres of factory industry, so its distribution within the country changed. Already, in the earlier part of the century, a tendency to become relatively

more populous was discernible in Lancashire and the central and west midlands. This trend continued after 1760, but it was now accompanied by a much more rapid growth of towns – Manchester, for instance, had in 1757 less than 20,000 inhabitants, but by 1790 they numbered 50,000 and were nearly double that figure by the turn of the century. Locally the consequences were over-crowding, cellar-dwellings, jerry-built tenements with inadequate sanitation or ventilation, squalid conditions: but as yet only a small minority of the nation was affected; the greater part of the English people still lived in the countryside, and only just over a fifth in towns with 10,000 or more inhabitants.

The oligarchs

Social and political leadership in this robust society still rested predominantly in the hands of the landed class. Within this social group the distinction between aristocracy and gentry was more artificial than real. Title had meaning in the court circle. But numbers of country gentlemen could boast a rent-roll and a local influence greater than that of many members of the peerage. From time to time, in the obituary notices of wealthy commoners, comes the phrase: 'reputed one of the richest men in the Kingdom'. Such outstanding individuals were of course exceptions: more common were those comfortably situated gentlemen with £2,000 to £5,000 a year, the placid domesticity of whose lives is portrayed for us in the novels of Jane Austen.[1]

The country houses of peer and gentleman were the nurseries of national culture and tradition. Gentry of the wealthier sort sent their sons to Westminster or to mix with the young lords at Eton: the future squire would learn the elements of his law at the inns of court: for some there followed a spell at Oxford or Cambridge, capped perhaps by the broadening experience of the Grand Tour. Till the long French wars broke the tradition after the turn of the century, the Grand Tour helped to widen the cultural horizon of the English ruling class. In the earlier years of the reign, Horace Walpole or George Augustus Selwyn moved as easily in the society of Paris as that of London. The end of a war, 1763, 1783, 1802, saw a rush of Englishmen to France, to renew old acquaintance and re-experience the well-appreciated stimulus of foreign contacts: a spirit of international fraternity outweighed all bitterness bred of national rivalries. Italy was more difficult of access – nevertheless numbers of young Englishmen on tour reached Florence, Venice, Rome, and absorbed some knowledge of their people and their style. Other parts of the Continent were perhaps less popular, but were by no means neglected.

Richard Arkwright, the cotton manufacturer, it is said, contemplated accumulating enough wealth to pay off the national debt! Josiah Wedgwood of pottery fame died reputedly worth over half a million. These men were exceptional, but they stand as reminders that trade and industry were increasingly the basis of fortunes which could compete on even terms with those derived from the land. Land and trade were interests which sometimes might, and did, clash in the sphere of politics. But Britain gained inestimably from the circumstance that no caste barrier divided landowner and merchant. The enterprising landed proprietor, like Coke of Holkham, was at heart a business-man: it might be pure chance whether the undertakings in which he interested himself were entirely agricultural, or whether he branched out, as did the Duke of Bridgwater, into investment in canals and the production of coal. Younger sons of the peerage and gentry went into commerce: and often enough their elder brothers, who took the land or the title, picked their wives from the wealthy merchant class. Snobbery there might be, but no caste division: thus in Staffordshire the leading landed magnates paid due personal attention to Josiah Wedgwood, treating him as one of the important figures in county life – as indeed he was.

Political power, the conduct of public affairs, lay in the hands of the landowners and, to some extent, of the commercial class. In the countryside, the squires ran the local administration and dispensed justice, in quarter and petty sessions, and

[1] About 1809 "all the country gentlemen of any note" in Kent were said to have £3,000–£4,000 a year (*British Public Characters*, Vol. X (1809–1810), p. 534).

through their membership of improvement boards and turnpike trusts. At the centre they brought their influence to bear on the national councils in parliament. To the men of the eighteenth century, parliament was primarily a meeting place of interests. The greatest of these was the landed interest, for those who held landed property had a stake in the country more distinct than that of any other class. By comparison the commercial interest was less important, though it was recognized that its claims must also be given due weight. And there were also others: for instance, attention – perhaps at times too much attention – was usually paid to the West Indian planters from whose ranks came a small, compact group of men in the House of Commons. Mere numbers having no place in the orthodox contemporary theory of representation, the astounding, antiquated anomalies of the representative system drew little fire except from a small radical minority. What matter that a green mound at Old Sarum returned two members, and by the *fiat* of a single individual who owned it? Pocket boroughs were even defended, as providing a way into parliament for representatives of the landed and commercial interest with the minimum of trouble and expense. The metropolitan area, as radicals were never weary of pointing out, had but eight members in parliament – two for Middlesex, two for Westminster, four for London – whereas by the proportion of land tax its inhabitants paid it could well claim fifty. But compensation was provided within the system, since thirty or forty London merchants would usually buy their way into parliament *via* the small rotten and pocket boroughs of the southern and western counties. Very populous constituencies appeared positively disadvantageous, at a time when the mass of the people was largely illiterate and entirely indifferent to political questions, and elections became competitions in the provision of bread and circuses – a number of such constituencies were to suffer a measure of disfranchisement at the hands of the propertied reformers of 1832. Except in the counties and a few leading city constituencies (and not always in these) politics played little or no part in the determination of contested parliamentary elections.

Party divisions of the modern type did not exist. The name 'Whig' was regarded as having a mystical aura of constitutionalism and virtue, and from time to time various political groups in opposition laid exclusive claim to it as part of a 'smear' campaign against their successful rivals in office. But its value as a political connotation was *nil*. It is impossible to maintain on the evidence, that the younger Pitt, for instance, was less 'whig' than Charles James Fox. Fox's associate, the Duke of Portland, once spoke of the value to the country of a 'whig' party, but this was only a few months before he carried his political following into Pitt's ministry in a war-coalition.

Limited monarchy

At the head of the government stood the King. In theory he was still the active leader of the executive, enjoying a right to employ the ministers of his personal choice which was sometimes challenged but very generally conceded. The constitution established by the Revolution of 1689 set, so it was assumed, King, Lords and Commons in mutual balance, each with power to keep the activities of the others within due bounds. In practice the King was obliged to carry on the government with close attention to the wishes of the House of Commons, from which, periodically, money or assent to legislation had to be obtained. Convenience dictated the selection of a leading minister in whom the House of Commons placed confidence: no government would last long if this rule were not observed. But the sovereign's choice was not determined, as now, by party, nor did party solely sustain the government in parliament. Political parties in the eighteenth century were no more than personal followings limited in size: the party numbering more than thirty or forty in the House of Commons was exceptional. The members of a government, while drawing part of their parliamentary support from their own factions, relied largely upon the votes of members of two perennial parliamentary groupings which the onset of democracy has since swept out of existence – these were the party of court and administration, composed of courtiers, government officials, contractors, pensioners and parasites,

who gave political allegiance to the King's government whoever composed it, and the independents, for the most part country gentlemen, who scorned attachment either to the court or to a faction and voted as led by their conscience, or their judgment, or by their response to some brilliant piece of oratory. Parliament paid due deference to the King's government. But it stood apart, an independent authority, reserving the right to reject measures of which it disapproved: such a rejection was not, however, normally intended or construed to mean a withdrawal of confidence and did not entail the ministers' resignations.

This eighteenth-century parliamentary system allotted no logical or recognized role to an Opposition, although oppositions were almost always in the field, led by disgruntled politicians who found themselves excluded from office, and backed by the natural critics of authority, who may be encountered in any representative gathering of men. But since the phrase 'the King's government' then carried a more literal meaning than in our modern usage, signifying government by the King and his ministers, a systematic opposition, aimed at discrediting a group of ministers, could plausibly be considered an attack upon the King himself and was often looked upon as discreditable, if not disloyal. Also, as the electorate (such part of it as was politically conscious) did not regard itself as arbiter in the conflict between rival gangs of politicians contesting for office but thought that this should be decided by the King, opposition of this kind was hardly ever successful.

The operation of this system of 'limited monarchy' required good judgment and balance on the part of both the King and his leading minister, qualities not conspicuously present in the early years of the reign. George III, approaching twenty-three at the time of his accession, was particularly nervous and immature, of high ideals and virtue but narrow outlook, entirely without experience of the world, and frankly terrified of his new responsibilities. Brought up by his domineering mother in complete isolation from the youth of aristocratic society – contact with whom, she feared, would corrupt him – it was small wonder that at first he found it almost impossible to take people as they were. Far too conscious of other people's moral failings, he felt that practically all the politicians were worthless, and thought it hard that he must perforce employ them. Thus at first he clung in desperate dependence upon his friend, Lord Bute, a worthy, serious-minded, well-intentioned man, full of book-learning, but in politics as much a greenhorn as his master and not competent to occupy the leading place in government into which he was soon thrust by the King's insistence. Not for several years, and then, in part, only because he was bullied by George Grenville out of his habit of turning constantly to Bute, did George III begin to stand on his own feet. Thereafter he tried to cover up his lack of talent by incessant industry, and in time he acquired a very considerable experience and knowledge of affairs. But he can hardly be said to have had much aptitude or judgment. Little originality of mind is apparent in his voluminous correspondence with his ministers, and his opinions, once formed, were impervious to the best-marshalled arguments. In private life he had many estimable qualities, a sincere religious feeling, a strong sense of family responsibility, and wide cultural interests. But he had to force himself into his public role by conscious effort, and it was many years before he could play it with assurance. He was conscientious to a fault: but for all the close attention which he paid to the activities of his ministers, it cannot be said that he ever stepped outside his recognized constitutional position, and historians are now agreed that there was no real foundation for the charge that he attempted to resume a vanished royal authority and to pervert the constitution of 1689 – this bogey existed only in the fertile Irish imagination of Edmund Burke. A man of no more than average ability, he could not give a lead in statesmanship: rather he faithfully reflected the conservative opinions and prejudices of the great majority of his subjects on such major political issues as the American War of Independence, constitutional reform, the French Revolution, the emancipation of Roman Catholics.

The combined ineptitude of the King and the politicians at first produced a series of weak and short-lived governments. Consciousness of his

own incapacity for the political game soon drove out Bute. His successor, George Grenville, had good abilities but little vision, and was overbearing and tactless. After two years his services were dispensed with to make way for the even briefer ministry of Lord Rockingham, an amiable amateur who hardly dared open his mouth in the House of Lords. When twelve months later this government dissolved away through internal weakness and the King turned to Chatham, faint hopes appeared of firm leadership and a more stable political order. But almost immediately Chatham was stricken by gout and manic depression, and his deputy and later successor, the Duke of Grafton, a youthful rake who later became a prim Unitarian, was a political nonentity. Not until 1770, after five ephemeral ministries in ten years, did government at last settle down to some sort of stability. Lord North, the new first minister, intelligent, witty, popular, imperturbably good-humoured, was a first-rate House of Commons man, though sadly lacking in driving force. He retained office for nearly twelve years, until irretrievable defeat in the American War of Independence finally discredited his ministry and obliged the King, greatly against his will, to part with it. From the subsequent two-year period of political confusion and short-lived ministries a new stable government at last emerged under the leadership of the younger Pitt. Though mistakes can be laid to his charge, Pitt was nevertheless the ablest first minister of George III's reign, active, clever, flexible of mind, as assured of support in the House of Commons as North, but commanding it quite differently, by force of character rather than popularity; far ahead of North in his grasp of economic and financial principles and in his willingness to promote advantageous policies and sound administration. Though out of office between 1801 and 1804, Pitt dominated the political scene from 1784 till his death in 1806 – and even afterwards, for his young followers provided the core of later ministries.

The problems of empire

Problems loomed before these successive governments, requiring far greater powers of statesmanship than lay at their disposal. Most constant of them was the consolidation and development of empire – empire conceived primarily as an area of trade relations with non-British peoples, Redskins, Asiatics, Africans, rather than as an area of settlement. The reign opened in the midst of a great struggle – the Seven Years War of 1756 to 1763 against France (latterly also against Spain) – which was primarily a war for empire. The successful conclusion of this conflict at the Peace of Paris of 1763 reaffirmed British naval superiority and transferred to British rule large tracts of the empires of her Bourbon rivals. In a spirit of heady self-confidence the nation set forth to exploit these advantages to the full. Hence disputes with Spain over the Falklands and Vancouver Island, a renewed outburst of oceanic exploration, and the search for the supposed wealthy and populous southern continent – a myth finally dispelled by the voyages of Cook, who pressed south with supreme intrepid daring to the forbidding frozen barriers of the Antarctic. To the East there were abortive attempts during the 'seventies to establish a commercial base in North Borneo, a stepping stone to the expansion of the China trade. For the same purpose Penang was purchased in 1786, and a little later Lord Macartney sent as envoy to Pekin: but China, as yet, kept the British at arm's length. During the great wars with France after 1793, the safety of the long trade route to the East was a primary concern of British statesmen, leading to the occupation, and eventual retention at the peace of 1815, of Dutch and French settlements at the Cape, Ceylon and Mauritius.

Ideally an empire of trade involved no more expense or responsibility than the upkeep of a few commercial posts. This was the initial assumption underlying British penetration into India, and it seems at times also to have coloured official views about relations with the native peoples of North America. But an empire of mere trading posts proved untenable in the face of European competition. The pressure from France left the British no choice between withdrawal or the assumption of new territorial commitments. Advance or retreat – these were the alternatives

posed during the Seven Years War, and the victorious peace of 1763 ensured that the advance would be sustained.

In India the war secured primacy for the British East India Company over its French competitors. But at the same time, the involvement of the Company's agents in native politics, partly to win commercial advantage, partly to counter the intrigues of the French, led inevitably to political domination. Step by step, the Company was brought to assume the administration of Bengal, to add to its territories in the presidencies of Bombay and Madras, and to form a network of protectorates and alliances covering the whole of south and central India. Meanwhile British ministries gradually progressed from regarding India merely as a milch cow to accepting responsibility for the good government of the native peoples which the course of events had brought under the Company's rule. Reform owed much to the generous humanitarianism of Edmund Burke, though its practical application owed more to one or two leading government officials and especially to that oft-maligned Scotsman, Henry Dundas. The India Act of 1784, with later amending legislation, subjected the Company's administration to some degree of government control, and under the great pro-consuls, Cornwallis, Wellesley, Minto, India began to receive the best that Britain could give. 'Unimpeachable character', declared Dundas, could be 'the only proper ground of recommendation to situations of importance'. Thus began the tradition of the 'White Man's burden', which was to inspire so much of British imperial enterprise in the following century.

Similarly, in North America, the close of the Seven Years War brought the British new responsibilities in an enormous area peopled by a few thousand French settlers and unnumbered Red Indians. The double task of grappling with this problem and with the financial disorder produced by the war, led to one great reverse in the onward march of empire which many contemporaries regarded as an irretrievable disaster – the loss of the thirteen 'old' North American colonies. For long afterwards the history of the British part in this great crisis was written from a 'Whig' tradition, of which the basic texts were the fulminations of Edmund Burke and the letters and memoirs of Horace Walpole – and the Americans were represented as the active champions and saviours of the constitutional liberties won in 1689, menaced after 1761 by the high monarchical pretensions of George III. This tradition was a travesty of the facts. Politically and economically the old colonies had grown to maturity, and the removal of the French from Canada relieved them of any sense of dependence upon Great Britain, giving free rein to the nascent sense of nationhood which almost every fibre of their existence had helped to foster. The root cause of the American Revolution was the determination of British governments to restrain within the old, traditional framework of colonial organization a great association of communities which had largely outgrown it. A series of administrative and legislative measures followed hard upon the peace of 1763 – the tightening up of the revenue services, the imposition of new restraints upon trade, direct taxation by the Stamp Act of 1765, indirect taxation by the Revenue Act of 1767, the establishment of a colonial board of Commissioners of Customs, the strengthening in 1768 of the system of vice-Admiralty courts in order to enforce observance of the laws made at Westminster. Vacillation in the application of this policy from time to time in face of spontaneous resistance – the repeal of the Stamp Act in 1766 and the modification of the Revenue Act in 1770 – were rightly construed by the colonists as signs of weakness, and encouraged resistance. For resistance was immediate and widespread. At bottom, the demand of the Americans was for free and equal association within the empire. In 1765 Governor Bernard of Massachusetts observed: 'In Britain the American governments are considered as corporations, empowered to make bye-laws, existing only during the pleasure of parliament. . . . In America, they claim . . . to be perfect states, no otherwise dependent upon Great Britain than by having the same king.' That most eminent of Americans, Benjamin Franklin, stated, in a letter to his son, the view that the British Empire was not a single state but comprehended many: 'The

King, with their respective parliaments, is their only legislator.' In our own days such a conception has become an accepted commonplace. But two centuries ago it was entirely unacceptable to British statesmen. For them the constitutional unity of the empire, manifested by the legislative supremacy of parliament throughout all its parts, had become an unquestioned axiom, alike for economic and for political reasons. The King reflected a general opinion when he declared in 1775: 'America must be a colony of England or treated as an enemy. Distant possessions standing upon an equality with the superior state is more ruinous than being deprived of such connections.' It is against this background of conflicting principles, clashing economic interests, and emotional reactions, that the detailed steps in the quarrel between Britain and America find their true context. Regulation provoked disobedience, attempts at enforcement provoked disorder; finally conflicting claims to legislative sovereignty were put to the arbitrament of war. A variety of factors decided the outcome in favour of the Americans: on the British side, a confusion of aim, wavering between suppression and conciliation; consistent under-estimation of the enemy, which halted the mobilization of resources at home and vitiated the conduct of operations in America; apathy and lack of enterprise among the commanders; and, at the last – and this was decisive – inability to keep command of the seas when France and Spain at last intervened to help the Americans: on the American side, their familiarity with local conditions, the extent of their territory, above all, ruthless purpose and superiority of morale, typified by the persecution of the empire loyalists and by the unswerving tenacity of Washington. Britain with a limited army of professionals and mercenaries could never hold down a nation in arms. The Franco-American victory at Yorktown in 1781 forced home this lesson, and by the treaty of Versailles of 1783 Great Britain conceded the independence which she no longer had the power to deny. But the growth of British communities overseas continued. The future dominion of Canada was to grow from the province taken from France in 1763 and from the older colony of Nova Scotia won from the French half a century before. Migrants flowed in both from Britain and – in the considerable numbers of the empire loyalists – from the territories of the newly-established United States. By the end of the Napoleonic Wars the population of British North America was already well over half a million. Australia, from 1788, played the humbler role of a home for convict settlements, though free settlers were beginning to arrive by 1815.

Ireland set another problem which was never satisfactorily solved. Economically it stood as the most important subordinate unit in the British Empire, regulated, like other parts of the Empire, for Britain's benefit. During the American War, encouraged by American example, an Irish national movement, led by the gentry, the merchants and the professional class, pressed for and largely secured the removal of commercial restrictions and the grant of equal constitutional status. But the Irish executive still remained responsible not to the Irish nation and parliament but to the British government. Still worse, the religious animosities which had been sunk during the early nationalist agitation of the 'seventies soon reappeared to embitter the political scene. In a country with an overwhelming Catholic majority a small episcopal Protestant minority continued to monopolize control of power and patronage. The demands of the Irish Catholics for full political enfranchisement were stubbornly resisted by a die-hard Protestant group in power at Dublin, and discontent, stimulated by the impact of the French Revolution, soon reached the verge of rebellion. In 1800 Pitt attempted a solution of legislative union, which was virtually condemned to failure from the start, owing to the veto pronounced by the King and many of Pitt's colleagues against Catholic emancipation and the conflicting interests and aspirations of the two nations thus yoked together.

Britain and the age of revolution

At times, during the 'sixties, the career of John Wilkes caused almost more noise in politics than did America. This squinting demagogue richly

deserved his punishments. But he struck decisive blows for the freedom of the press. After 1771, journalists, printers, and publishers could neither be pursued by secretaries of state employing general warrants nor by the House of Commons arrogantly intent on preserving its privilege of secrecy of debate. Newspapers flourished on the growing appetite for political news, though the press was still, at the turn of the century, a puny stripling in comparison with the giant it was later to become.

Wilkes and America kindled the flame of political radicalism. Thinkers, historians, and doctors of divinity re-scrutinized theories of political obligation and the principles – and legends – of parliamentary representation in England. If the Americans were right in their claim that there should be 'no taxation without representation' – which so eminent a politician as Chatham was prepared to allow – what of the many humble subjects of the King at home who had no real voice, or no part at all, in the choice of representatives? There were not wanting extremists like John Cartwright, who followed this theme to its logical conclusion and plumped for universal male suffrage. Until the French Revolution, and the wide circulation of Tom Paine's *Rights of Man* with its slashing attack on the aristocratic system, radicalism remained the sport of an intellectual minority: it struck no popular roots. After 1789, it began to gather support among both the middle and the lower class. But moderate reformers in general (being propertied men) recoiled from 'mobocracy' and contented themselves with proposals aimed to diminish the supposedly excessive influence of the executive in parliament. In the search for a stick to beat the ministers, opposition politicians of whatever persuasion could be united in support of the traditional policy of an attack upon placemen: this was the theme of the much vaunted, and also much overrated, schemes of economical reform, elaborated by Burke and others, and enacted in 1782. A smaller proportion of the politicians were won over to the idea of minor changes in the representative system, but trial proved that such proposals had little chance of acceptance in parliament, and after the outbreak of the French Revolution the governing class closed ranks almost unanimously in defence of the established order.

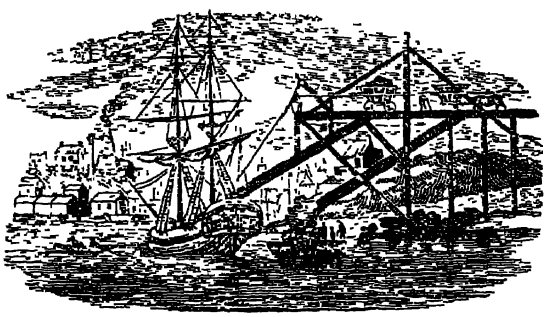
For over twenty years from 1793, the great wars against France absorbed Britain's attention and dominated her politics, damping down the response to pressure for reforms, giving birth to repressive legislation for security reasons, drawing most political groups into active support of the government, leaving only a factious minority in opposition. During the first part of the wars Pitt showed at his worst. He had judged France's strength by the disorder of her finances, expected the early collapse of her military efforts, never comprehended the dynamic violence of the French Revolution or the nationalist upsurge that placed Napoleon at the head of a nation in arms. British war councils were divided. To Pitt the war began as an operation to check French aggression in the Low Countries and maintain the balance of power – a task in which British naval supremacy would be employed to win colonies, some of which might be kept, others used as bargain counters at a peace. To the King, and to many of Pitt's colleagues, the war was a crusade in defence of the civilized order: Toulon and Vendée should be put before the West Indies. In consequence the country's resources were frittered away in various theatres of operations, in no one of which was decisive superiority achieved. Only at sea did Britain hold firm. The moral of the American War was not forgotten. In 1793 Britain at least had the ships, and it was not long before proof was given that she still had men who could direct and operate a fighting machine of superb efficiency. But not until after many years, and after Pitt was dead, did British ministers fully absorb the lesson, that Britain could not expect the continental enemies of France to do all the land fighting but must perfect a large and efficient army and achieve concentration at the opponent's weakest point. In the meantime the navy kept the country secure from invasion and the sea-lanes open, until at last Napoleon committed his fatal blunder, leading the *Grande Armée* to destruction in the Russian snows. England, as Pitt had foretold, had saved Europe by her example, holding

out hope and maintaining a centre of resistance against the most formidable military machine hitherto known.

The mind and spirit of the age

A survey so brief as this of an age so crowded with life and movement can do little more than outline the major themes: justice can hardly be done to the richness of its achievement or to the wealth of talent that treads the stage. The keynote was an exuberant vitality: not for nothing was there some conscious turning back to the Elizabethan past: and that same vitality at work in the growth of commerce and empire can be seen also in the nation's intellectual and cultural life. The work of craftsmen, artists and architects will receive mention in other sections of this work, but reference must be made here to advances in science and to the great literature of the early romantic period. Experiments by such men as Dr Priestley, Joseph Black, Henry Cavendish, John Dalton and Sir Humphrey Davy carried scientific knowledge forward with decisive strides. Dalton's development of the atomic theory placed chemistry at last on the basis of an exact science. Under the direct patronage of George III, Sir William Herschel became a pioneer of sidereal astronomy. On many fronts the work of enquiry went on, stimulating, and deriving advantage from the formation of numerous scientific societies and a growing output of scientific journals. Literary and kindred pursuits displayed, in their own fashion, the same vigorous independence and questing spirit. In prose and in poetry there was revolt against the formal style and artificiality of the earlier eighteenth century. With deliberate, conscious purpose, Wordsworth led the search for simple, natural expression of the deepest human emotions, producing much rubbish in the process, but in the true flights of his genius carrying English poetry forward to long unheard heights of achievement. The literary exuberance of the age appears again in Boswell's *Life of Johnson* and in Sheridan's plays; its robust intellectual confidence in the works of history and economics from the pens of Edward Gibbon and Adam Smith.

Last, but not least, the Evangelical movement, of which the first springs lay earlier in the century, was broadening and deepening its influence, reaching rich and poor, giving a sense of purpose and Christian mission both to the Church of England and to the sects. Evangelicalism brought back into religious observance and the conduct of daily life the enthusiasm and fervour which the leaders of eighteenth century society had regarded as 'bad form'. In the 'nineties it drew increasing strength from the reaction against the pagan character of the French Revolution. Apart from its general evangelism, it gave a new impetus to the humanitarian movement and stimulated demands for social reforms. An active humanitarianism showed itself in many ways – for instance, in the demand for the reform of the ferocious penal code; and, above all, in the great crusade conducted by Wilberforce and others against slavery and the slave trade, a battle partly won, when, in 1807, the slave trade was made illegal. Another of the fruits of the movement was the establishment of Sunday schools which made more widely available at least the first elements of education: for many years the Sunday schools provided all the education, either religious or secular, which many children received. The legacies of the Evangelical movement were great and lasting. 'Methodism' had an influence far wider than that of the sect which took its name. It was a way of life devoted not only to religious observance but to self-discipline and work for others. As such it was a powerful instrument of social cohesion, impressing upon those who had wealth and power the need to observe their responsibilities no less than it reconciled the poor to the idea that suffering and poverty were part of the natural order. Finally here was to be found the great formative influence moulding the British character for the next three generations, implanting in it a sense of mission and devotion to a stern code of moral behaviour, a strength of fibre and a strength of will.



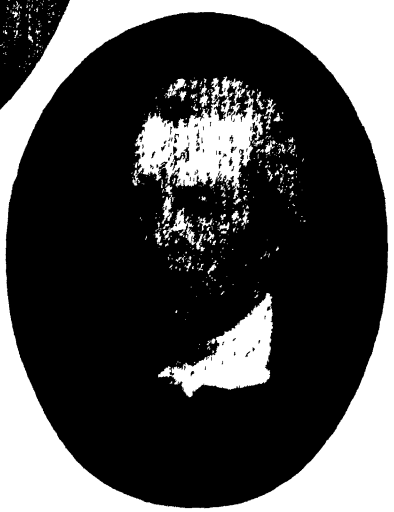
Coal being loaded on the Tyne. Tail-piece from Thomas Bewick's *A History of British Birds*, Vol. 2, 1804.

A

B

C

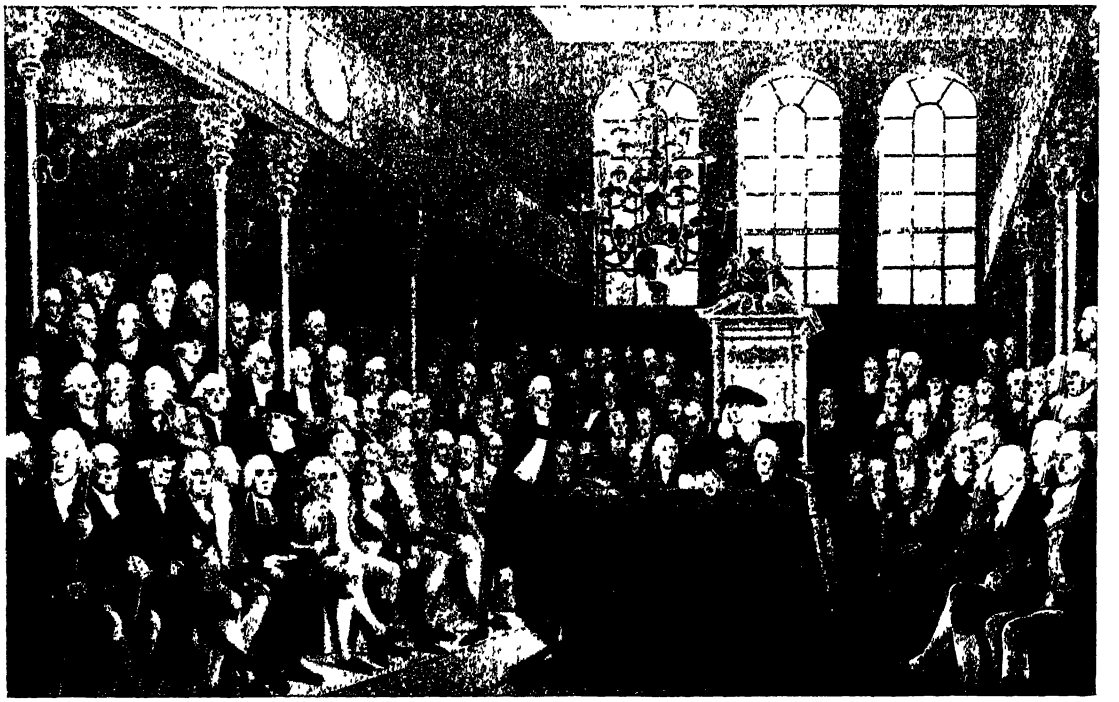
D



E

(A) The Earl of Bute, by SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS. (B) Frederick North, 2nd Earl of Guildford by NATHANIEL DANCE. (C) King George III, Studio of LAWRENCE. (D) William Pitt, 1st Earl of Chatham, Studio of R. BROMPTON. (E) William Pitt the Younger, by J. HOPPNER. *The National Portrait Gallery.*

PLATE 1

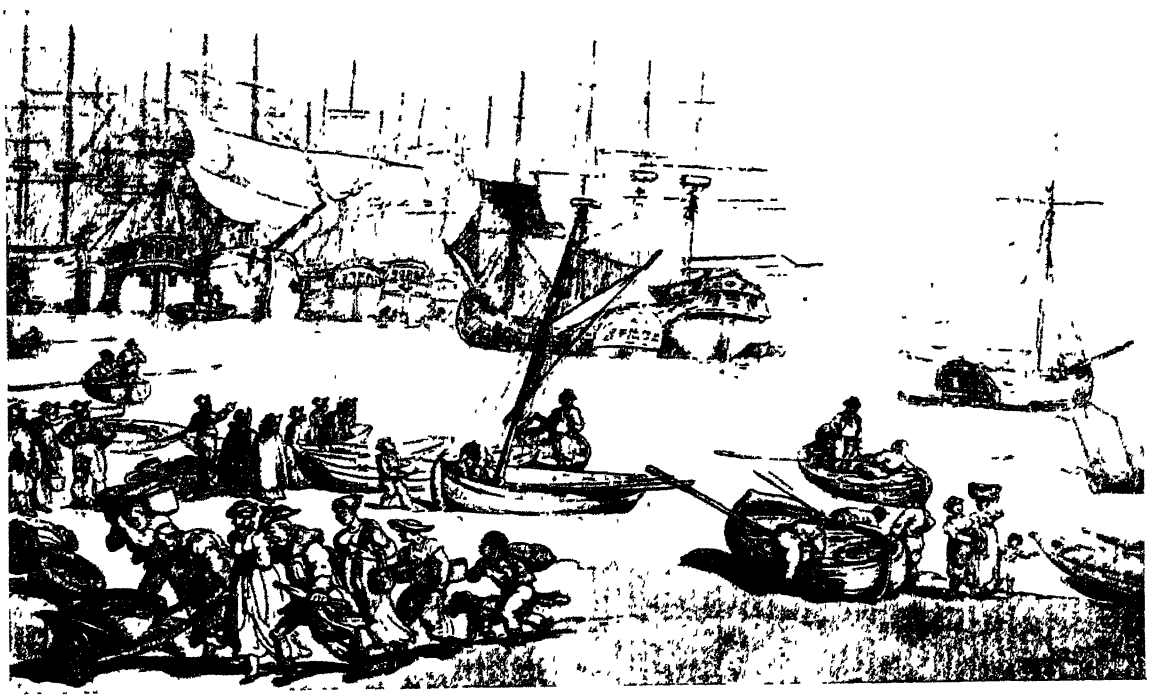


(A) Pitt addressing the House of Commons, 1793, by K. ANTON HICKEL. Members include Canning, Wilberforce, Sheridan, Erskine, Fox. *The National Portrait Gallery.*

(B) William Drake, M.P. for Amersham and his family, by J. H. MORTIMER (1741–79). *Francis Tyrwhitt-Drake, Esq., and History Today.*

PLATE 2

(A) Coffee Room, by THOMAS ROWLANDSON.
Messrs Ellis and Smith, and The Avalon Press.



(B) Portsmouth Harbour, by THOMAS ROWLANDSON.
The British Museum and The Avalon Press.

PLATE 3

Bedlam Furnace. Water colour by JOHN SELL COTMAN, made after his visit to Coalbrook Valley in 1802.
Sir Edmund Bacon and the Courtauld Institute of Art.

PLATE 4

facing page 13

Architecture

Architecture

CLIFFORD MUSGRAVE

The classical tradition

The reign of King George III saw developments in architecture no less momentous and even more swiftly varying in mood than those of the first half of the eighteenth century. Fashionable society, the *dilettanti*, the connoisseurs and amateurs of the arts were mercurial in their response to rapidly succeeding tendencies of style. Despite the rapid fluctuations of taste, throughout the period different schools or movements flourished independently at the same time, or even intermingled.

The impetus of the Palladian movement initiated by Inigo Jones, and promoted from about 1720 by 'that Apollo of the Arts', Lord Burlington, was to inform architecture to the end of the century and even beyond. By 1760, however, the leaders of the movement, William Kent, Giacomo Leoni, Colin Campbell, and Lord Burlington himself, were dead. For over a decade, architecture in the Burlingtonian tradition had tended increasingly to consist of uninspired applications of the Palladian formula. The perfection of classical form and proportion according to the rules laid down by the ancient Roman architect Vitruvius, and his sixteenth-century disciple Palladio, had been regarded more and more as having declined, in the works of the Burlingtonian followers, into mere 'correctness', purity of style into coldness and monotony.

Before long, fashionable patrons were to welcome the dazzling innovations of the brothers Adam, but the time of distinguished achievements by upholders of conservative tradition was not entirely past. The two leaders of this school at the middle of the century, Sir Robert Taylor and James Paine, 'nearly divided the practice of the profession between them, for they had little opposition till Robert Adam entered the lists'. So wrote Hardwick in his life of Sir William Chambers. Although their popularity waned somewhat during the meteoric rise of Adam, without departing from scholarly correctness, they rivalled him with the elegance of their interior designs, which derived frequently from sources that the Scottish architect had used.

Little of the work in our period of James Paine (1716–89), is accessible, save the central block and curved connecting corridors of the north front at Kedleston, Derbyshire (1757–61) (Pls. 5B, 8A), where Adam followed him, as he did also at Nostell Priory, Yorks, the building of which Paine had been 'entrusted to conduct' at the age of nineteen in 1735.

Paine's north front at Kedleston is very heavily Palladian, with niches instead of windows behind the columns of the portico. The individual charm and elegance of his style is expressed in the grouping in pairs of the columns and pilasters of the façade of Wardour Castle, Wiltshire (1770–6).

Sir Robert Taylor (1714–88) began his career as a sculptor. The carved pediment at the Mansion House was executed by him in 1744. He soon abandoned this profession for architecture, and before long was appointed Surveyor of the Bank of England, and to other official posts in which he

was able to display his sound scholarly accomplishments.

Taylor's interiors at the Bank of England (now either demolished or reconstructed) were among his loveliest work. No. 37, Dover Street, London (1772) (Pl. 7A), which he built for the Bishop of Ely, shows his great elegance of style in the columns flanking the windows, while the pronounced rustication of the arched ground floor gives firmness of character to the façade. Rusticated arches are also used with impressive effect in Maidenhead Bridge (1772), and the engaged columns appear again on a more monumental scale in the end pavilions of the little known Stone Buildings at Lincoln's Inn (1775), which is truly but austerely Palladian, with the main block lacking a central feature, and unrelieved windows.

The most splendid of all his works was Heveningham in Suffolk, *c.* 1782 (Pls. 9B, 10B), where the interior was magnificently remodelled later by Wyatt. Here Taylor relieved the traditional Palladian severity by enriching the great central block of the north front with an imposing attic having four sculptured figures standing before pilasters, a theme of French origin which a fellow traditionalist, Sir William Chambers, was to use at Somerset House later. The tendency to increased decoration is shown in the heavy festoons and sculptured medallions of the centre block, and in the relief panels with which Taylor adjusted the size of the first floor windows to the scale of the frontage.

A provincial contemporary of Paine and Taylor, and like them a Palladian traditionalist, John Carr of York (1723–1807) achieved a very considerable reputation throughout the north of England. One of his earliest commissions was Harewood House, Yorkshire, but his work there was almost entirely altered by Adam, and later Barry. The whole of the village, however, is by Carr, and his cottages are simple, solid and admirably proportioned. Several houses in York are his, but his masterpiece is the austerely graceful Assize Court (1773–7). With its recessed Ionic portico, roof balustrade, the small attics carrying urns, and the sculptured figures, the building combined delicacy with monumental impressiveness. The Female Debtors' Prison (1780) opposite the Court is also Carr's work, but enlarged by Atkinson in 1803. Carr built the stables at Castle Howard, the Town Halls at Chesterfield and Newark, Nottinghamshire (1776), and the graceful Royal Crescent at Buxton (1779–84).

The stupendous Palladian achievement of the Royal Crescent at Bath built from 1767 to 1775 by John Wood, the younger (1728–81), must be regarded as belonging to the school of traditional classicism. The great sweep of the Crescent contains 114 gigantic Ionic columns with the angular Roman volutes which Adam disliked. The Crescent is the culmination of the work of the Woods in Bath, and inspired the building of Royal Crescents in other towns such as Buxton and Brighton.

In domestic architecture the Palladian ideal found expression more easily in large houses, or in great monumental street compositions with a number of houses combined in a single palatial unit, than in the restricted scope of the small house.

Up to the time of Adam, the 'Wren' house, of red brick with a steep tiled roof and dormer windows, had remained the standard of vernacular building, with Palladian details of porch, pediment and modillion cornice applied according to the means of the owner. In the middle century, plaster walls had taken the place of pine panelling, but in small houses plaster decoration rarely approached the rococo elaboration of the great mansions, and was usually confined to a moulded cornice and possibly some enrichment in the shape of a 'tabernacle frame' above the chimneypiece. The lighter mouldings and stucco ornaments of the Adam brothers, and to some extent also of Taylor and Chambers, lent themselves more readily to use in small houses.

An invigorating influence in the development of traditional classical architecture was the growing conviction that the 'true style of the ancients' was to be found in the buildings of ancient Rome, rather than in the work of the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Italian architects which inspired the Burlingtonians. Two books published by Robert Wood on the buildings of the Roman Empire, *The Ruins of Palmyra* in 1753 and *The*

Ruins of Balbec in 1757, were early contributions in this country to the neo-classical movement. They were followed in 1764 by the folio which recorded a visit to Spalato in Dalmatia by Robert Adam during his studies in Italy several years earlier, *The Ruins of the Palace of the Emperor Diocletian at Spalatro* (see Pl. 93A).

All through the years of Robert Adam's fashionable supremacy, an official architect, Sir William Chambers (1723–96), maintained his leadership of the traditional school. Surveyor-General (1782) and first Treasurer of the Royal Academy, he was Adam's greatest rival and critic. Two of his works lie at extremes of scale. One is the delightful Casino at Marino, Dublin (1761). Despite its smallness, there are monumental qualities in the beautifully balanced harmony of Doric columns, pedimented doors, and ornament of sculptured urns and figures. The other work, Chamber's masterpiece, is Somerset House (1776), one of the grandest compositions of its time. The Strand front, with its Corinthian façade and sculptured figures, displays the influence of French architecture. The great quadrangle is given impressiveness by the central Corinthian features upon each side. Upon the embankment side the extended composition is broken up by three principal features, the two on either side being the most beautiful of the whole work. They take the form of Palladian bridges built on water-gates over rusticated Doric archways. The river front was completed to the original design by Sir Robert Smirke in 1830, and the west façade was built by Sir James Pennethorne in 1856: a skilful addition which is not conspicuously out of harmony with the original composition.

As an official architect, Chambers built few houses, but Asgill House, Richmond, is a distinguished example of his style.

Chambers advocated purity of style and masculine qualities of design. His power of majestic composition was combined with a sense of grace and beauty in decorative detail, acquired during his studies in Italy and France, of a kind regarded in conservative circles as being less facile and evanescent than the frivolous style of the Adam brothers. His great treatise on *The Decorative Part of Civil Architecture*, published in 1759, became the standard authority upon classical design, and was being republished even as late as 1862. It was probably due to the corrective influence of Chambers at the time of the Adam brothers that the work of the succeeding period developed in a sound and satisfying manner.

The Adam revolution

When Robert Adam returned in 1758 from four years' study in Italy it was to a world of fashionable patrons eager for the innovations in architecture and decoration which he offered them.

Robert Adam (1728–92) was the second of the four sons of a successful Scottish architect, William Adam (1689–1748). The most important of the houses he built was Hopetoun, which occupied him until his death, when it was completed by Robert.

The style which Robert Adam, and later his brother James, acquired in Rome was an eclectic one, compounded from various sources, from Roman and Greek buildings of the classical period, the Roman architecture of the Renaissance, the painted 'grotesque' decorations imitated by Raphael and his pupils from classical originals in the loggias of the Vatican and the Villa Madama, and the arabesque decorations of Herculaneum and Pompeii.

The innovations which they introduced lay not so much in the characteristic ornament of the Adam style, the festoons of husks, the swags, the garlands, the vases, urns, tripods and gryphons, the arabesques and scrolls – many of these motifs had been used by other architects – but in the highly personal refinement and delicacy which Robert Adam gave them, the lighter proportion of the elements of a design to the space containing them contrasting with the heavier treatment of earlier times. When in 1773 the brothers Adam published the designs of their principal achievements in *The Works in Architecture of Robert and James Adam, Esquires*, they spoke of the 'almost total change' they had effected. While they decried the 'ponderous compartment ceiling' of earlier times,

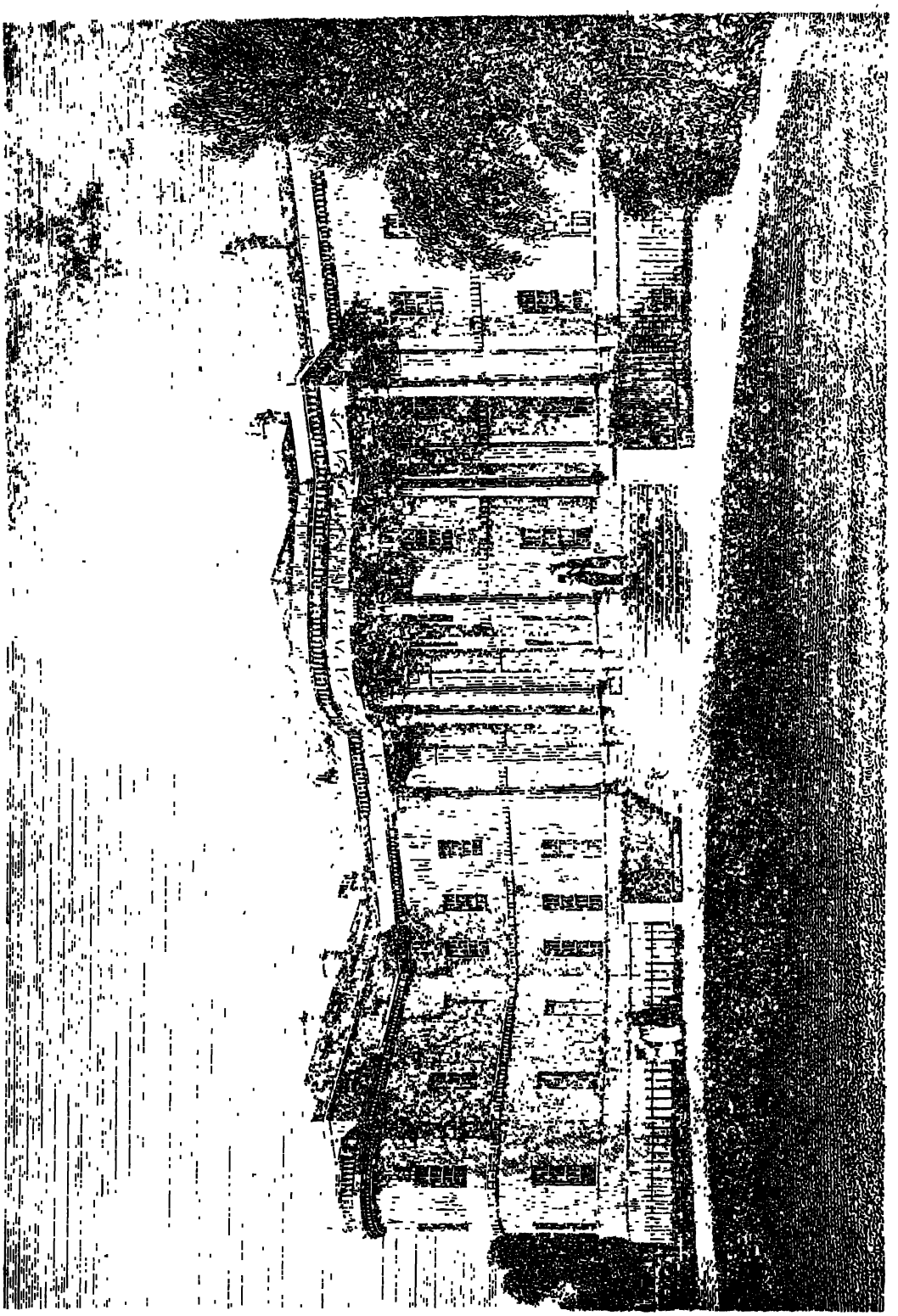


Fig. 1. Luton Hoo, Bedfordshire. Built by Robert Adam, *c.* 1768–75, the interior was entirely remodelled after a fire. It houses one of the most important collections of art treasures in the country. In 1816 Robert Smirke replaced Adam's delicate bow-shaped portico with a heavier rectangular pedimented entry. From Jones' *Views of the Seats of the Noblemen and Gentlemen of England, etc.*, 1829.

they did not abjure it entirely, but only those of the 'most enormous weight and depth' of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. In the half-domed apses of Adam's entrance halls and dining-rooms, and in the drawing-rooms and saloons of Syon (Pl. 6), Kedleston (Pls. 5B, 8A) and Osterley (Pl. 12A), and other houses, are to be seen beautiful examples of these forms, with square, circular, lozenge and octagonal panels or *caissons*.

Robert Adam's fame is shared with his collaborators. Joseph Rose, the creator of his plaster ceilings, trophies of arms and other decorations, was one of the greatest artists in stucco of any country or age.

The painted panels, roundels and medallions depicting somewhat primly elegant scenes from an idealized world of classical mythology, which are found in Adam's interiors, are mostly from the hands of Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), an Academician at the age of twenty-six, and her husband Antonio Zucchi.

One of Adam's earliest works was the Admiralty archway (1759) which expressed that talent for monumental design which he always believed was his especial *métier*. With this screen of Doric columns, decorated with charming sculptures by Michael Spang, Adam successfully corrected the faulty composition of Thomas Ripley's dull Palladian Admiralty building of 1724, with its excessively projecting wings.

The interiors at Hopetoun, where Robert worked before visiting Rome, is in the prevailing rococo style of the mid-century, but in the acanthus scrolling of his gilded friezes there is to be seen the precursor, on a bolder scale, of the 'flowing rinceau' or branched ornament which is one of Adam's favourite motifs. The magnificent ballroom has a handsome Venetian window, but with the typically Palladian angular volutes to the Ionic capitals which he was later to abhor. This type of window, with arched central portion and two side-lights, appears in almost all of Adam's frontages, and is seen at its loveliest, with columns of pink alabaster, in the state dining room at Kedleston.

Adam's new style is shown in a robust and vigorous form at Hatchlands, Surrey (1758–61), especially in the dining-room ceiling and the sculptured fireplace, but the bay-leaf frieze and ceiling mouldings of the staircase hall still have a hint of early Georgian heaviness.

Harewood, where Adam worked from 1759 to 1769, completing and transforming the work of Thomas Carr of York, was the first of Adam's palatial houses. It is famous for his early collaboration, as at Nostell Priory, Kenwood, and other houses, with Thomas Chippendale, who provided the magnificent furniture almost certainly to Adam's designs.

An important aspect in Adam's system of design was the planning of rooms to obtain dramatic variety of scenic effect, with varying geometrical shapes in successive rooms, in the manner of the ancients. He preferred to make a room octagonal or circular rather than square, and oblong rooms were diversified by apses and recesses (exedrae). Relief was given also by changes of colour, tone and texture, in order to express the character and purpose of different rooms. Dining-rooms were usually given painted and stuccoed walls instead of textile hangings which might retain the smell of food.

Adam's conception of classical planning was intended in his great palatial houses to serve the 'parade, the convenience, and the social pleasures of life', and it is seen in its most majestic form at houses like Syon and Kedleston. But it applied also to the smaller houses built by himself and his followers, where each room was given its distinctive character.

At Syon the varying levels of the old house aided Adam's planning for scenic variety. The ante-room there is one of the most glorious rooms in England, with its twelve immense columns of verd-antico marble, dredged from the Tiber, surmounted by life-size gilded statues, and gilded trophies by Joseph Rose. The state dining-room is one of Adam's finest and most characteristic, with its arched recesses, apses and half-domes and columnar screens, a noble fireplace, and a ceiling of the best early flat type, with the famous 'flowing rinceau' in the frieze. The excessive length which Adam found in the Jacobean long gallery

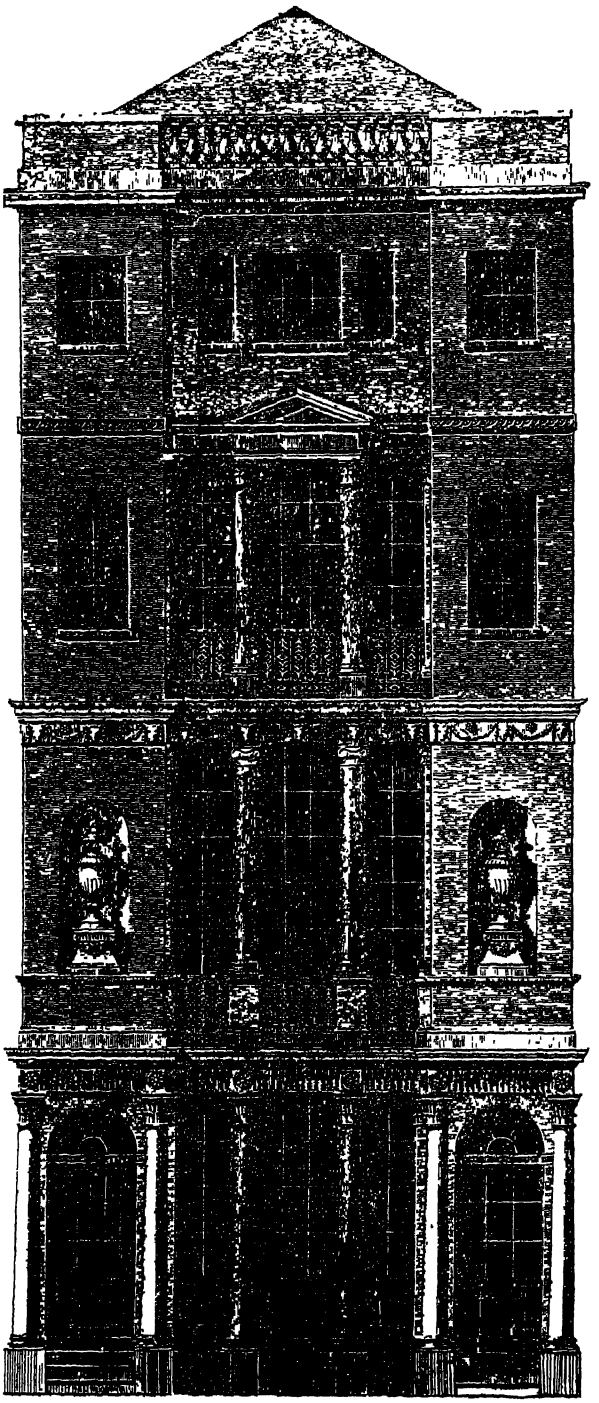


Fig. 2. The British Coffee House, Cockspur Street, London S W 1. Built by Robert Adam 1770, demolished 1886. Decorative richness in a narrow town exterior. From *The Works in Architecture of Robert and James Adam*, 1773.

he remedied by dividing the room into five units of three doors and two fireplaces, and by leading the eye outwards towards the walls by the recessed geometrical figures of the ceiling ribs. With its soft pink and green colouring, and small scale of ornament, the gallery was intended to afford 'great variety and amusement' to the ladies of the household, and a contrast to the more vivid splendours of the state drawing-room.

Robert Adam's reputation survives chiefly as an interior architect, but at Kedleston, where he completed work begun by Paine in the most severe Burlingtonian manner, he created an impressive example of that baroque quality of 'movement' which he admired in the work of Vanbrugh, and strove to restore. By 'movement' he intended 'the rise and fall, the advance and recess within the diversity of form in different parts of the building'. This quality of depth, of three-dimensional architecture, Adam expressed in his splendid south front at Kedleston by his use of the Roman triumphal arch theme with [illegible] entablature and disengaged columns, and by contrasting the convex curve of the dome with the superb concave sweep of the double flight of entrance steps (Pl. 5B).

The marble hall at Kedleston, with its twenty immense monolithic Corinthian columns of Nottinghamshire alabaster, rivals the ante-room at Syon in splendour. The contrast between this hall and the great domed saloon is one of the most striking examples of Adam's dramatic planning. The saloon rises half as high again as the hall, with a dome coffered with octagonal panels.

At Osterley, Middlesex, Adam gave dignity to an existing Elizabethan house by adding a magnificent Ionic portico. Begun in 1761, but not finished until 1780, his early and middle styles are revealed in an enchanting succession of beautiful rooms. The entrance hall is of the customary Doric order, and has coffered apses in his early style. In the library the fireplace and bookcases have ornament of the small scale which, in his middle period, tended to fussiness, but here the effect is of a restful softness of texture as in the gallery at Syon. The drawing-room (1773), praised by Walpole, has a ceiling of early character

coffered with octagons, and an astonishingly beautiful central oval with long radiating leaves, adapted from a ceiling in the Temple of the Sun at Palmyra. This ceiling design was used also at Woburn by Flitcroft, and in West Wycombe Church. The three following rooms are of later date, and looking through the vista from the gallery, the increasingly diminishing scale of Adam's ornament with the years is seen in the decoration of the successive doorcases.

Adam's planning for scenic variety and contrast in his rooms is seen on a smaller and more domestic scale in the beautiful tapestry room, dining-room and library at Newby, Yorkshire. Begun in 1767, though not completed until 1785, or even later, the spirit of the interior is of his early phase, and the house has many affinities with Osterley and Kenwood. The sculpture gallery, with its coffered domes and stucco ornament, reflects the influence of the Catacombs and of Herculaneum, but its beauty is cold and static, for unlike Adam's libraries and dining-rooms, it has not become part of the instinctive life of its users.

Kenwood (1767–9) marks the culmination of Adam's first period, and embodies in the Great Library one of his masterpieces (Pl. 9A). Here his use of apses is carried to a glorious climax, their semicircles joining with those of their half-domes, with the arches of the bookcase recesses, and with the vault of the ceiling. The entablature, carried across the apses upon the Corinthian columns and pilasters of the screens, forms the stable rectangle which holds these curves in tension.

The following decade, from 1770 to 1780, saw the creation of the famous London house interiors, such as Chandos House, Home House, Portman Square (now the Courtauld Institute), and 20, St James's Square. In the first of these Adam indulged on a small scale his genius for varied internal planning, but in the decoration began to depart from his early robust manner in favour of a more superficial and linear design. In the exteriors of these houses too, the treatment is lacking in relief.

Home House (built 1775–7) is one of the most elaborately superb town interiors in existence yet it marks the distinctive moment of change in Adam's decorative work to a completely flat and geometrical scheme of ornament. The virtuosity of the decoration is breathtaking in its mathematical complexities, but after this date there will be little of his subtle judgment in the relationship of forms to space, and instead a tendency to fill every void with facile and meaningless ornament. It was such over-elaboration which caused Horace Walpole to speak of Adam's ornament as 'larded and embroidered and pomponned with shreds and remnants, and *clinquant* like all the harlequinades of Adam, which never let the eye repose a moment'.

At Nostell Priory, Yorkshire, Robert Adam made additions to the house built by James Paine between 1735 and 1750. Adam's interiors here are among the loveliest of his middle period, especially the salon and hall, the latter containing a skilfully conceived apse to give drama to an otherwise uninterestingly square room.

In his Scottish castles Robert Adam developed some of his youthful romantic imaginings. Mellerstain, Berwickshire (1770–8), is a romantic battlemented house, with enchanting interiors. The library, with its ceiling panels painted by Zucchi and its stucco relief panels, is one of his most superb rooms (Pl. 12B). The dining-room also has a beautiful ceiling of his best middle period. Culzean Castle, Ayrshire (1777–90), is Adam's most picturesque building, with battlemented towers, and an exceptionally fine oval staircase hall.

Bradwell Lodge, Essex, is a highly characteristic small house, with its delicate staircase, the marble mantelpiece with a frieze attributed to Angelica Kauffmann, and blue and white plaster reliefs.

In the years from 1780 to his death in 1792 Robert Adam turned to town-planning schemes and public buildings, striving to realize his ambition to create works of great monumental quality. In all these projects he was denied the fulfilment of seeing them completed, but all show a return to his early three-dimensional exterior design, and some of them, such as the National Register House (1774–92) of Edinburgh, and the University there (1789–91), serve as true memorials to the architect's greatness.

In his designs for Fitzroy Square and Portland Place, London, and Charlotte Square, Edinburgh, Robert Adam carried forward the Palladian ideal of unified town-planning embodied in the work of the Woods at Bath. James Adam was chiefly responsible for Portland Place, of which only a few houses remain, including Nos. 37, 46 and 48, distinguished by pairs of front doors combined under a single arch, anthemion decoration and sculptured plaques.

From the publication of the *Works* in 1773 onwards, the diffusion of the Adam brothers' distinctive style throughout the land became irresistible and limitless. The 'electric power of that revolution in art' which they effected, to use the words of Soane, ran through the whole field of design concerned with houses. A host of design-books placed the Adam repertoire of ornament in the hands of architects, builders, decorators, merchants and craftsmen of every kind. In many towns of these islands, the brothers Adam or a follower of theirs created pleasing expressions of the new outlook, especially in the form of assembly-rooms and ballrooms like those of Crunden and Goulden at Brighton, of Baldwin at Bath, and at Shrewsbury and Bury St Edmunds, which reflected the new and gracious phase which had been reached in the evolution of social intercourse.

The Adam manner, with its light mouldings and delicacy of plaster decoration, was more readily modified to the needs of small houses and for cheapness than the heavier or more complicated rococo plaster ornament of the Palladian fashion, and the new style quickly penetrated throughout all classes of domestic building. Even the Venetian window could be used in the simplified and inexpensive form of a round-headed central window with two narrow lights at the side, without columns or pilasters, but within an arched recess.

Many of the criticisms of the Adam manner resulted from the use of patent stuccos and compositions which enabled his designs to be mass-produced by innumerable imitators, with a consequent degradation of the style and a loss of its true character.

Of all the Adam followers, Thomas Leverton (1743–1824) was perhaps the greatest. His work is chiefly to be seen in Bedford Square, where each side has a pleasant central feature, and there are in some of the houses rooms of very great delicacy and charm. No. 1 has his characteristic shallow arches and a flat saucer-dome (Pl. 7B). No. 13 was the architect's own house.

Thomas Baldwin (1750–1820) was responsible for many of the most attractive buildings of the late eighteenth century in Bath. Great Pulteney Street, in particular, has the grace and dignity of Adam's finest street compositions, and his ballroom at the Guildhall (1775–6) is one of the most magnificent in the Adam manner.

John Crunden (1740–*c.*1828) is famous chiefly for Boodle's Club, St James's Street, London (1775), a charming design with a beautiful central feature of a Venetian window within a recess with a fluted tympanum. He also built the ballroom of the Castle Inn, Brighton (1776), which eventually became King George IV's Chapel Royal. This was afterwards demolished and re-erected as St Stephen's Church, Montpelier Street, Brighton, and is still worth visiting for the sake of the elegant details of its interior, such as Adam's favourite motif of a simple Corinthian capital from the Tower of the Winds at Athens.

Experiments in the picturesque

Aspirations towards classical purity were paralleled by the yearnings of romanticism. The cult of the Picturesque, which had brought about the revolution in landscape gardening effected by 'Capability' Brown and Humphrey Repton, created an interest in rural cottages, lodges, dairies, and farmhouses, which from about 1790 onwards became widespread through the publication of innumerable books of designs, by such architects as Charles Middleton, John Plaw, James Malton, and in his early years, by John Soane.

Blaise Hamlet, Gloucestershire, a village designed by the Regency architect John Nash, early his in career, in 1809, provides perfect examples of picturesque *cottages ornés*, with delightful variations of thatched and tiled roofs, gables, verandahs and porches.

Chinese pagodas, temples and summer-houses had been popular as picturesque features in the new 'irregular' park landscape since before the middle of the century. Sir William Chambers had travelled to China as a young man, and published his famous volume of *Designs for Chinese Buildings* in 1757, with the expressed intention of correcting the absurdities which had developed in the vogue for Chinese furniture, decoration, and garden buildings during the previous years. About the same time, while serving as architectural tutor to the Prince of Wales, who was in 1760 to become King George III, he was employed by the Dowager Princess Augusta to lay out the grounds at Kew Palace. Chambers embellished the gardens with pavilions, temples and other fantastic structures which are described in his book of 1763, *The Gardens and Buildings at Kew in Surrey.*

It is interesting to conjecture how much these buildings, several of them oriental, may have stirred the imagination of the new Prince of Wales, George Frederick, son of King George III, throughout the years of his childhood spent at Kew Palace, and inspired the oriental fantasies he was eventually himself to create.

The most important of the Kew buildings was the Chinese Pagoda, of ten stories, 160 feet high. Originally, on the angles of the roofing at each stage crouched guardian dragons holding bells in their mouths. They were covered with layers of multi-coloured glass, producing dazzling reflections in the sunlight. Eventually they disappeared, but the Pagoda still stands, brightly painted in red and blue, so impressive a landmark that Horace Walpole pretended that it could be seen from Yorkshire.

In 1784 the young Prince of Wales set up a marine residence at Brighton, in a 'respectable farmhouse', which Henry Holland was commissioned to rebuild in 1787 as a simple and elegant 'Graeco-Roman' villa, with a shallow domed rotunda and Ionic colonnade. Not long after, in 1801, Holland's assistant, P. F. Robinson, an architect of Picturesque country houses, made it more of a *cottage orné* with such typical features as verandahs, and shell-shaped canopies to the balconies, which from about that time came into fashion and are now regarded as charmingly distinctive of the smaller houses of the period, especially at the seaside.

The interior of this first 'Marine Pavilion' at Brighton was originally in the restrained classical manner of Henry Holland, though painted in gay colours of 'French-blue', bright yellow, maroon, and with ceilings of grey and white. At the time of Robinson's alterations the Prince of Wales had the whole of the rooms altered to a Chinese scheme of decoration, which the interior of the Pavilion, although later enlarged, has retained ever since. The rooms were decorated with Chinese wallpapers, porcelain, and furniture of bamboo and lacquer.

Unlike the reticent *chinoiserie* interiors of the 1750's and 'sixties, every detail, mouldings, fireplaces, doorways, was in the Chinese manner. Many reasons have been suggested for this revival in astonishing exuberance of the Chinese vogue, which had been in something of a decline, but it is possible that the Prince of Wales had found Henry Holland's rather primly simplified Adam style insufficiently gay for a holiday palace. Most of the State Apartments at the Royal Pavilion today have the magnificence which was given in later transformations of the building, but several rooms still retain the lively and barbarically colourful character of the first Chinese interior.

In 1803, William Porden (*c.*1755–1822), a pupil of James Wyatt, and who was then building Eaton Hall in Cheshire, with gothic tracery of cast-iron, was commissioned by the Prince to design a Royal Stables and Riding House at Brighton. They remain today, the Stables now a concert and conference hall called The Dome, the Riding House a banqueting and exhibition hall.

The exteriors are little changed, and form one of the most impressive architectural compositions in England. The style was not Chinese, but Indian, for the trend of romantic interest had switched away from China to that newly developed sub-continent, whose dazzling marble mosques and palaces seemed to offer rich new possibilities for Picturesque architecture.

The Indian interest was largely inspired by the drawings and aquatints of Indian buildings made

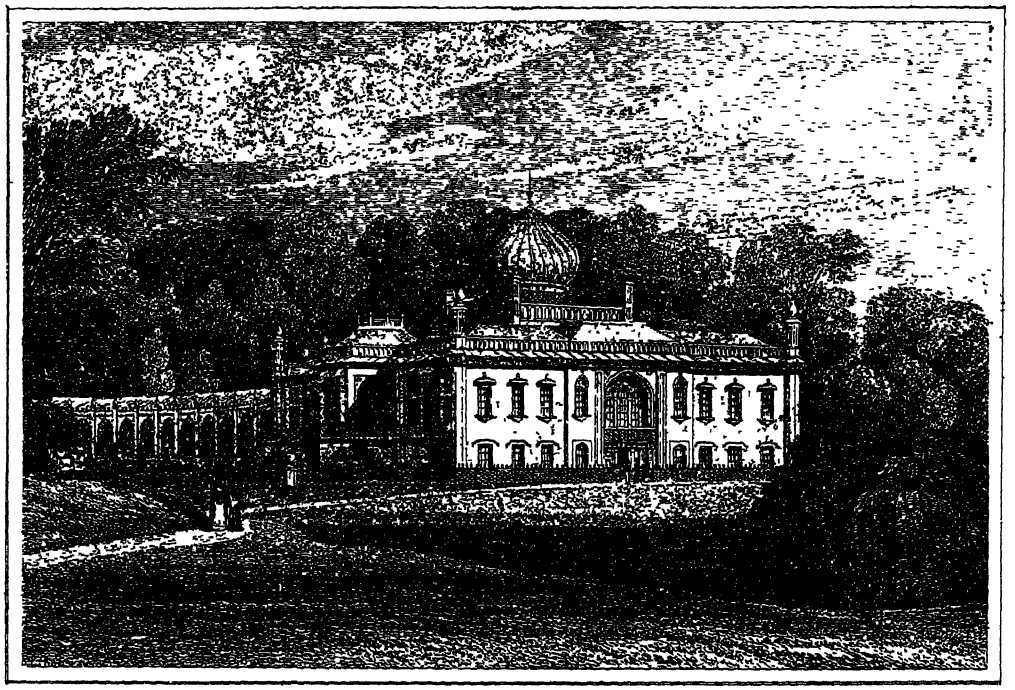


Fig. 3. Sezincote, Gloucestershire, by S. P. Cockerell, *c.* 1805. Indian architecture in an English setting, which inspired Humphrey Repton's designs (not executed) for rebuilding the Brighton Pavilion in Indian style. From Jones' *Views of the Seats of the Noblemen and Gentlemen of England, etc.*, 1829.

by Thomas and William Daniell in India a few years earlier. At that moment the Daniells were in fact working at Sezincote in Gloucestershire, which was then being built in the Indian style for a retired nabob by S. P. Cockerell (1754–1827) (Fig. 3). Humphrey Repton, the landscape architect, was also at Sezincote laying out the grounds, and in 1805 he was called from there to Brighton to design an extension for the pavilion in the Indian manner to accord with the new stables.

Repton's designs are reminiscent of Sezincote, with its single bulbous dome and scalloped Saracenic arches, but the Prince was overwhelmed by financial difficulties and the scheme was never carried out.

The final transformation of the Pavilion as an Indian palace by John Nash belongs to the flowering of the Picturesque movement in the time of the Regency, and must be left to the later volume dealing with that period.

Sezincote stands today, a dreamy Indian palace of honey-coloured stone, with a little Indian temple, fountain and bridge, in the wooded park which remains as Humphrey Repton planned it.

Graeco-Roman elegance

Robert Wood's two folios, *The Ruins of Palmyra* and *The Ruins of Balbec*, became prominent landmarks in the battle of the books which was waged over the relative merits of Roman and Greek architecture when the German scholar Winckelmann published his treatise on *The Imitation of Greek Works of Art* in 1755. The Roman architect Piranesi, in his earlier volumes, strove to demonstrate the unsurpassable glories of Roman architecture, but in his later works admitted the existence, and eventually the superiority, of the Greek.

The victory of the Greek style throughout Europe was consolidated by the publication over

many years from 1762 onwards of the four volumes of *The Antiquities of Athens* by James Stuart and Nicholas Revett, 'painters and architects'. The first of these authors immediately became the recognized authority upon the pure Greek style. He was nicknamed 'Athenian' Stuart and received a number of important commissions. Eventually, however, his drunken habits and unreliable business methods caused his never very extensive practice to dwindle away.

His Doric Temple at Hagley Park, Worcestershire (1758), a copy of the Temple of Theseus at Athens, is the earliest neo-Greek building in this country.

Although Shugborough, Staffordshire (1764–88), is not frequently accessible, it must be cited for the important work of Stuart's it contains, both in the house and park. In the latter there are copies of the Tower of the Winds and the Choragic Monument of Lysikrates at Athens, and a Doric Temple similar to the one at Hagley. Few others of his important works survive, save 15, St James's Square, London, an early expression of Greek Ionic, with caryatids copied from the Temple of Minerva, and the interior of the Chapel at Greenwich Hospital (1779–88). If the design is wholly Stuart's, and not partly by his assistant William Newton, the Chapel is Stuart's masterpiece, a glorious achievement with a lovely organ gallery with Ionic columns, and a superb ceiling of shallow vaulting. The astonishing church at Newnham Courtenay, Oxfordshire, where Stuart 'corrected' his patron's design, has another very graceful Ionic portico (to a blind wall) and a remarkable dome.

Robert Adam was a close friend of Stuart's, and absorbed a great deal of Grecian detail from the *Antiquities* into his own work. Indeed, Adam derived more from Stuart's book than from his own *Spalatro*: for example, the very charming and graceful capital from the Tower of the Winds consisting of an inverted bell covered with long smooth leaves, and a single row of curling acanthus leaves round the base. This and many other details of the buildings of Athens informed not only the work of Adam, but of the Wyatts, Holland, and later, Nash, and the host of architects of the Greek Revival of the first four decades of the nineteenth century.

Nicholas Revett (1720–1804) practised but little, and left even fewer architectural works. At West Wycombe Park, Buckinghamshire, Revett built the stately Ionic west portico (1771), and in the park a delightful version of the Tower of the Winds, a Temple of Flora, and a Temple of Music (1778–80).

Revett's famous church at Ayot St Lawrence is a somewhat coldly beautiful composition with flanking colonnades and small pavilions, recalling the Palladian fashion, but the details are Greek, and the Doric columns with recessed cap and base derive from the Temple of Apollo at Delos. The interior is most striking in an austere way, with large vaulted window openings, domed apse and ceiling, and simple recessed ornament, but its antecedents appear to be the Roman basilicas rather than the temples of Greece. It is an interior that anticipates the domed halls and arches of Soane.

The small number of surviving buildings by George Dance, junior (1741–1825), reveal little of the profound and far-reaching influence he exercised upon architecture, especially upon the work of his more famous pupil Soane, and eventually through him upon that of Smirke, Wilkins and Nash, and thus upon the great monuments of the later Greek revival.

One of his gifts was his ability to create dramatic effects without the use of columns, pilasters and other features of the classical orders, a characteristic which was later to become distinctive in the work of Soane, Henry Holland and James Wyatt. His style possessed a simple virile quality which derived from the Egyptian designs of Piranesi, and from neo-classical motifs which were predominant in French architecture at the time, such as pediments with acroteria, or corner ornaments.

His masterpiece, Newgate Prison, no longer exists, but the Bank of England Printing Works, Old Street, London, shows something of his dramatic power. In the houses on the north side of Finsbury Square, London (1777), can be seen the

graceful shallow arches above windows that proclaim his work, and the south front of the Guildhall which he rebuilt (1785) is an essay of his in the playful unscholarly Gothic of the eighteenth century.

While the Adam brothers were at the height of their fame, James Wyatt (1747–1813), a young architect who had returned from his studies in Rome in 1768, astonished the world of taste with a sensational design for rebuilding the Pantheon assembly rooms (demolished in 1922) which he carried out in 1772 at the age of 25. Henceforth Wyatt never lacked fashionable and wealthy patrons. When Chambers died in 1796, Wyatt was appointed in his place as Surveyor-General and occupied it until his death in 1813.

In 1776 Wyatt was called to Oxford to complete the Radcliffe Observatory which was left unfinished at the death of its designer Henry Keene. Keene (1726–76) was a minor architect who did much work of Gothic character in Oxford and elsewhere. The Saloon at Arbury, Warwickshire (1762–90), is a charming example of his Gothic style, and ranks as a considerable work of Georgian Gothic with Strawberry Hill and Lacock. Wyatt gave the design for the Observatory 'a distinction and originality of treatment altogether beyond the powers' of his predecessor. The octagonal tower is based on the Tower of the Winds, but the whole structure, with its graceful Ionic pilasters, pedimented windows and porch, has a charm that is distinctively Wyatt's (Fig. 4).

The over-elaboration and tendency to fussiness of Adam's interior designs during his middle period caused many patrons to turn their attentions elsewhere. Wyatt, with his adaptability and command of a wide range of styles, was able to make a virtue of the simplicity, within the general spirit of Adam design, which clients were now seeking. In his later life, Wyatt confided to his master, King George III, that 'on returning from Rome, he found public taste corrupted by the Adams, and he was obliged to comply with it', but early in his career he was able to create a formula which offered a relief from the less pleasing aspects of their style.

James Wyatt opposed the Palladian tradition and expressed the growing impulse towards simplicity by making very restrained external use of the classical orders, and designing his porticos with the columns rising direct from a pavement at ground level or with a few steps only instead of from a high podium. Frequently he used a simple balustrade instead of an elaborate pediment and dispensed with an attic storey. He greatly reduced external ornament, but gave an effect of repose and stability by horizontal bands or string courses at the levels of the various floors. Wyatt also gave interest to the simplified mass of his buildings by the use of bow-fronted wings, sometimes crowned by domes, and by bowed window-bays rising through two or more stories.

Wyatt's south front at Heaton Hall, Manchester (1772), has a restrained severe beauty, with its semi-circular central bay flanked by recessed Venetian windows, and colonnaded loggias linking it with octagonal end pavilions. The rooms show the inspiration derived by Wyatt from the brothers Adam, who indeed in their *Works* accused him of plagiarism, but generally the interior has a chaste simplicity and refinement of character that is a rarification of the brothers' style.

Heveningham Hall, Suffolk (*c.*1772–4), is Wyatt's interior masterpiece, remarkable for the completeness and unity of the decorative scheme and for the superb quality of detail, equalling that of Syon and Kedleston. The rooms have an entrancing, serene loveliness; the Hall with exquisite fan-vaulting in the barrel ceiling ; the saloon with a shallow vault and domed apses with recesses in them. The Etruscan Room is one of the most engaging of the several ventures in this manner. These beautiful rooms, mostly with painted decorations by Biagio Rebecca, stand as the most glorious achievement of the modified Adam inspiration (Pl. 9B).

Whoever was the architect of Rudding Park, near Harrogate (1805), it is a most refined and beautiful example of the mature Wyatt manner, with its bowed windows rising through two stories, and its rich yet restrained interior. The lovely silk-hung yellow drawing-room illustrates his simplification of the Adam style in its ceiling of

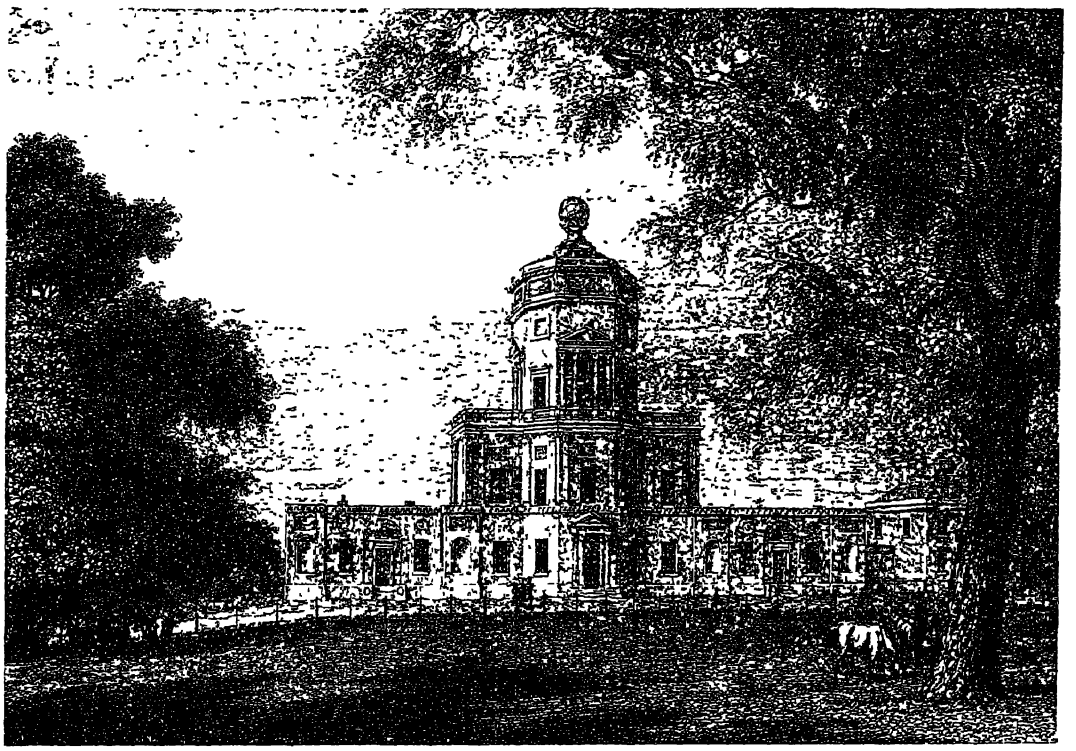


Fig. 4. The Radcliffe Observatory, Oxford, by James Wyatt, 1776.

concentric circles without the Adamitic infilling of ornament. In the planning of the house, devised to admit the sun throughout the day, it anticipates the functional lay-out aimed at by Regency architects. The Doric portico and balustrade resembles the south front at Heaton, and repeats on a smaller scale elements in James Wyatt's entrance at Goodwood, Sussex (1780), where the portico is of superimposed orders of Doric and Ionic with a balustrade, and his bowed features appear now as angle towers.

Castlecoole, Fermanagh, Ireland (1790–97), and Buscot Park, Berkshire (1780), are also pleasant examples of his style.

The legendary medieval world which was recreated with delicate rococo fancy at Lacock and Strawberry Hill in the mid-century, increasingly enthralled the imagination of clients and architects. James Wyatt's Gothic creations embodied scholarship as well as charm, and were interposed between his periods of classical building.

Ashridge is the principal existing example of these Gothic exercises, but is rarely accessible. Fonthill Abbey, in Wiltshire, Wyatt's stupendous Gothic fantasy, has vanished. So, too, has the most exquisite of his Gothic creations, Lee Priory – the 'true child of Strawberry' – with its graceful fan vaulting, but the fittings from one room there have been saved for re-erection at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

James Wyatt was the greatest of a widely ranging family of architects of that name who mostly perpetuated the style he had developed. His significance is that he simplified the refined neoclassical system of design introduced by the Adam brothers, and established a distinctive style of unaffected grace in place of Palladin pompousness.

George Steuart (*c.* 1740–1806) was a minor architect (not to be confused with 'Athenian' Stuart) who left two buildings of note. Attingham, near Shrewsbury (1783) (Pl. 11A), is basically Palladian in design with its columned portico

and curved flanking colonnades to side pavilions, but it illustrates the reaction from Palladian pomposity in the way the basement story has become lowered so that the pavement of the portico is only a few steps above the ground. This has the result of increasing the height of the portico, its tall Ionic columns giving an impression of great elegance. This effect, which is fully developed in the work of James and Samuel Wyatt, is to be found also in the buildings of Henry Holland and Sir John Soane of a later date. Steuart's interiors at Attingham bear a strong resemblance to those of Robert Adam's best period, with ceilings of well-proportioned design. The drawing-room fireplace is especially fine, with coupled Corinthian columns and a sculptured frieze.

The little Rotunda drawing-room is charming, with fluted Corinthian columns forming the walls into panels, which are decorated with restrained and graceful grotesques.

The church of St Chad, Shrewsbury (1790), is an astonishing creation. It has a circular nave and gallery in a rotunda behind a Doric portico and tower, the last feature superimposing the Choragic Monument from Athens upon the Tower of the Winds in a fashion which Regency architects were later to make popular.

The reaction against Adam found another champion in Henry Holland (1746–1806) who, like Wyatt, provided an antidote to the increasing effeminacy of the Adam manner in a restrained firmness and simplicity of design.

The two schools face each other across St James's Street, London: on the one hand is Boodle's Club (1775), by a disciple of Adam, John Crunden. On the other hand is Brooks's Club, remodelled by Henry Holland in 1776 as a severely elegant and somewhat simplified Palladian building.

Before long Holland had evolved the highly personal classical manner with a considerable admixture of Grecian ornament, which he called Graeco-Roman. This he adopted when re-building Carlton House for the Prince of Wales (1783–85). After making a visit here Horace Walpole wrote, 'How sick one shall be, after this chaste palace, of Mr Adam's gingerbread and sippets of embroidery!' Holland's new style was also apparent in the Marine Pavilion at Brighton which he built for the Prince in 1787, but which was later transformed by Nash. In the same year, Holland made alterations to Melbourne House (later Dover House and now the Scottish Office, Whitehall) where his pleasant little portico may be seen to be based on the drawings in *The Antiquities of Athens* of an Ionic temple on the Illisus at Athens. The simple version of the Ionic order used here shares with its richer and more sophisticated sister of the Erectheion the honours of a great deal of neo-Grecian architecture during the next fifty years. The same simple form of the Ionic appears in Holland's beautiful library at Althorp, one of the several lovely rooms remodelled by him in 1789, when he also gave the house its distinguished entrance front and casing of his favourite white brick.

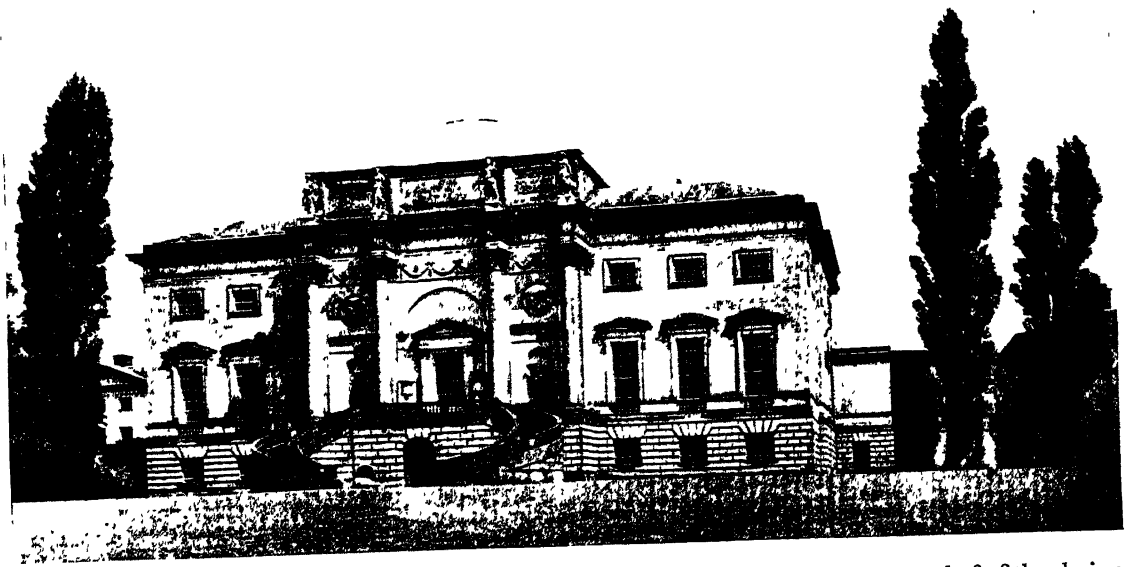
At Woburn, Bedfordshire (1787), the most accessible portions of Holland's work are the sculpture gallery and the charming Chinese dairy, one of the few surviving examples in this country of that fashion. The Swan Hotel at Bedford was also designed by him (*c.* 1790).

Holland's outstanding surviving creation, though not frequently accessible, is Southill, Bedfordshire,[1] which he remodelled in 1795. The garden front, with its loggias of coupled columns, has the simple elegance typical of Holland. The interiors are among Holland's finest, and, as at Althorp, combine the Greek and Roman elements with French influences which derived from his study of French architectural works, and from his employment of French craftsmen.

Holland's interiors are extremely restrained in style. The ceilings sometimes have a shallow vault, but are frequently plain, relieved only by narrow ribs or bands of plaster with key-pattern, *guilloche* or other simple ornament. The foliated capital from Athens, of which Adam was so fond, Holland also used after simplifying it by omitting the row of acanthus leaves. Holland's rooms breathe a spirit of dignified grace that is the expression of his reserved and thoughtful nature.

[1] See *Southill: a Regency House* (various authors), Faber & Faber, London, 1951.

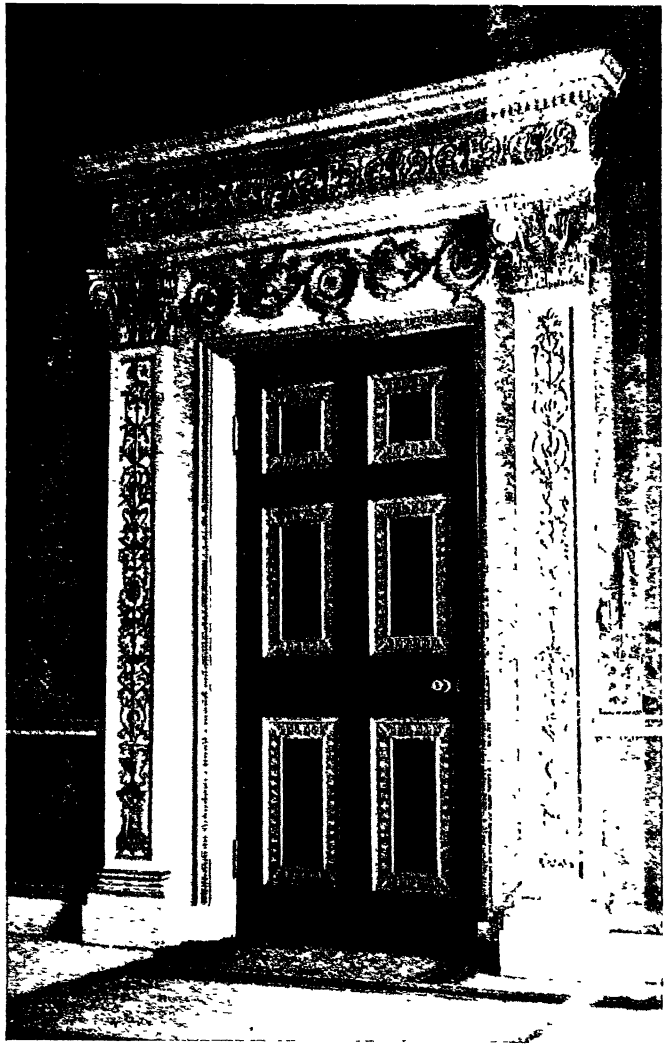
(A) ROBERT ADAM. Osterley (1761–80). The original Jacobean house given dignity by a raised entrance court and stately portico. *C. Musgrave*



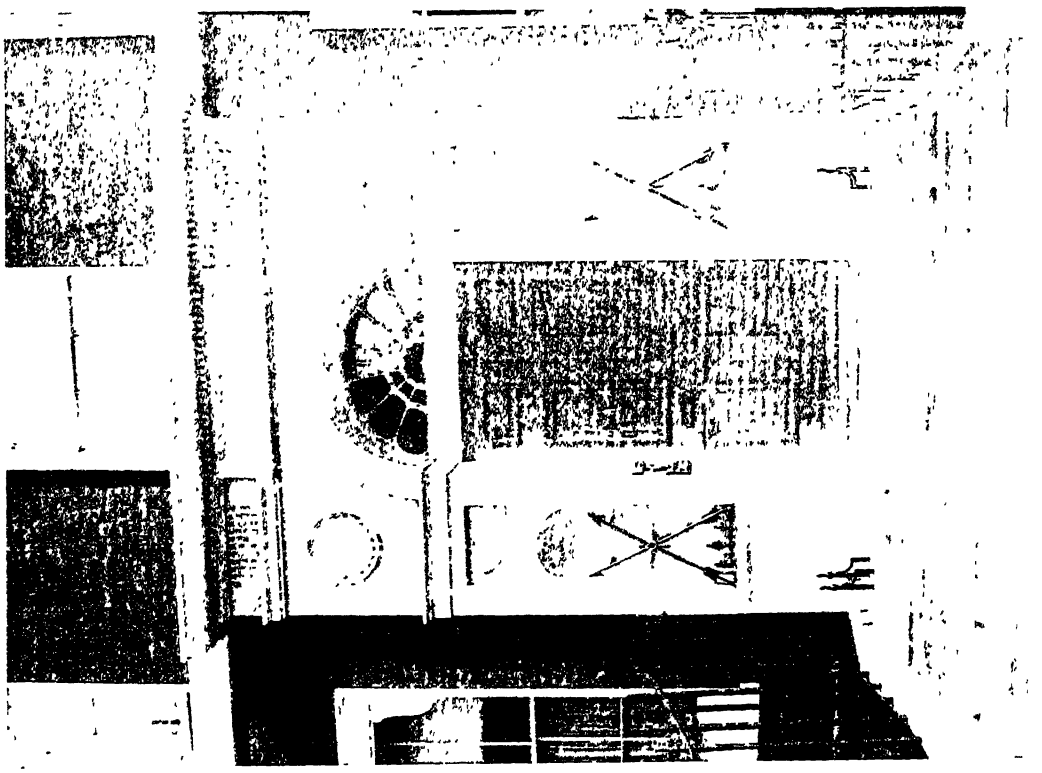
(B) Kedleston Hall, Derbyshire (1765–70). Robert Adam's South front. The strong relief of the design illustrates his theory of 'movement'. *A. F. Kersting*

PLATE 5

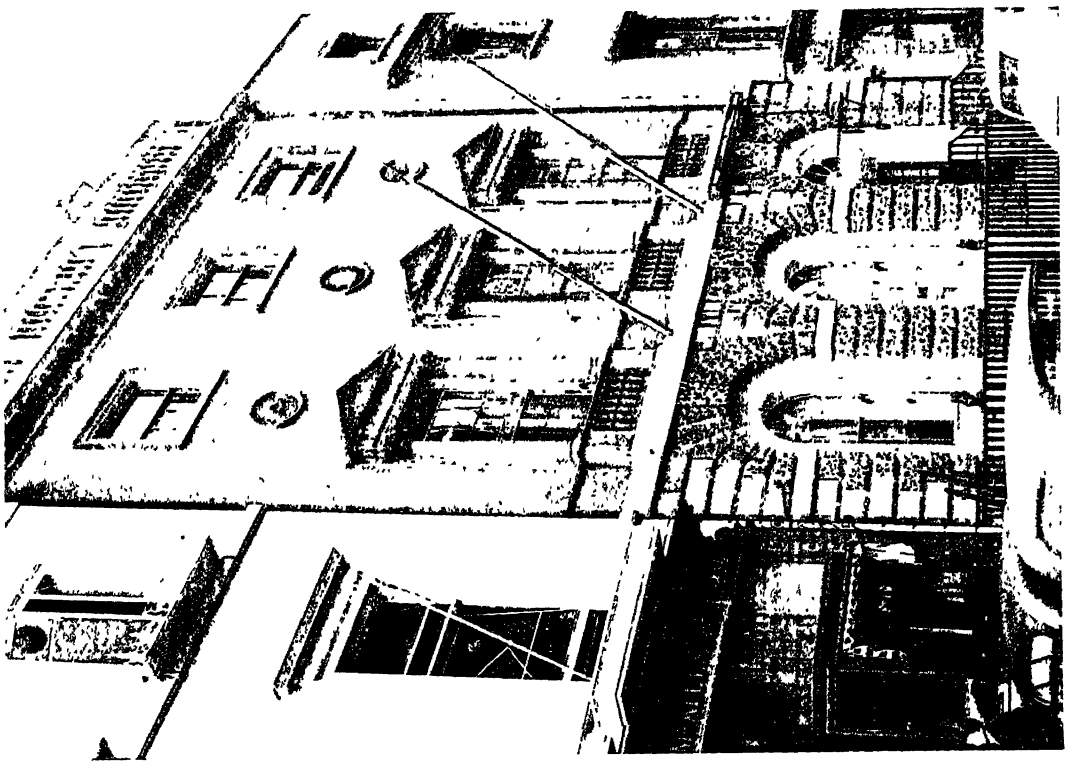
(A) Syon. Robert Adam's magnificent ante-room (1762–69) with verd-antico marble columns dredged from the Tiber, and gilt plaster reliefs by Joseph Rose. *A. F. Kersting*



(B) Syon (1762–69) The State Drawing-room One of Adam's finest doorcases, with characteristic ornament. *C. Musgrave*

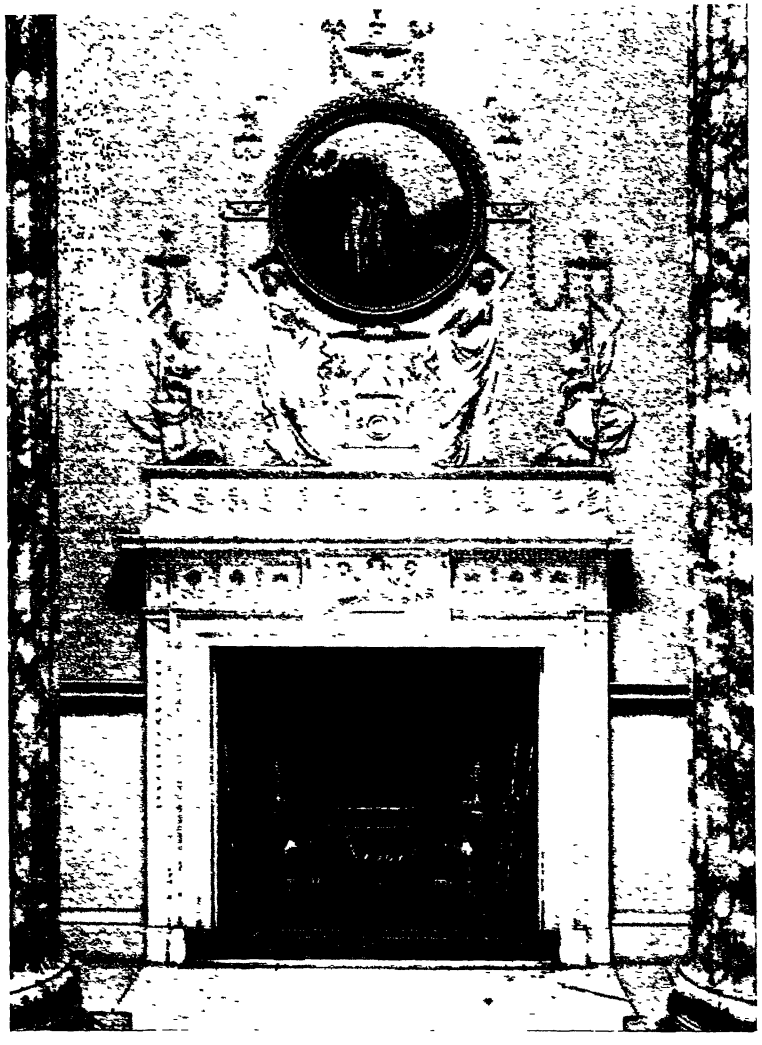


(B) Thomas Leverton. No 1 Bedford Square, London (*c* 1775). An individual interpretation of the neo-classic manner. *C. Musgrave.*



(A) Sir Robert Taylor. Ely House, 37 Dover Street, London (1772). Palladian order and Taylor's austere elegance. *C. Musgrave*

PLATE 7



(A) Kedleston Hall, Derbyshire (1765–70) A fireplace in the Marble Hall. Adam's delicacy and refinement in the ornament. The plaster reliefs are by John Rose, the roundel painted by Zucchi. *A. F. Kersting*

(B) The Steine, Brighton (*c.* 1780) An elegant porch in a simple form of Roman Doric, for a small town house. *C. Musgrave*

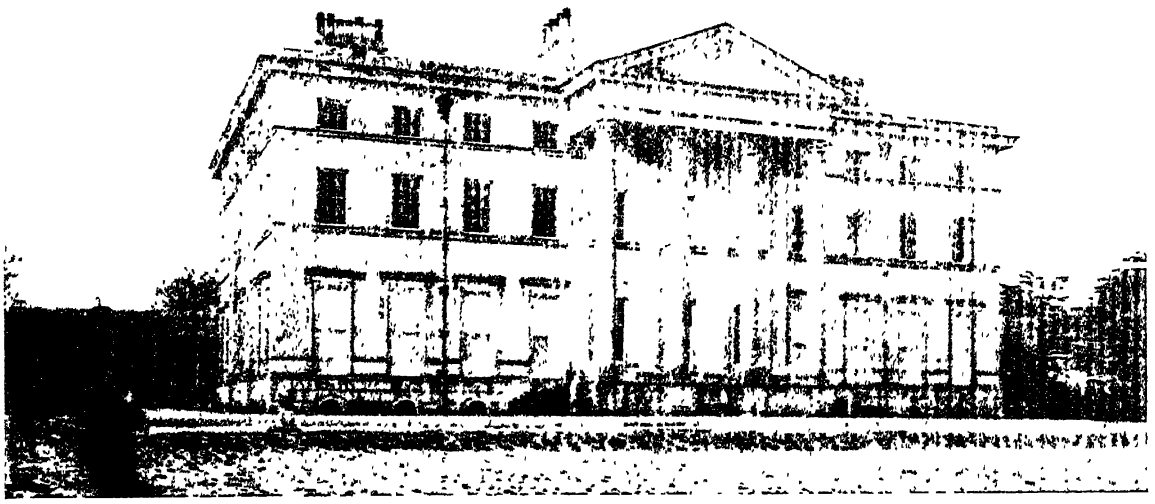
(A) Kenwood, London (1767–9). The Library. One of Robert Adam's most superb rooms; its ornament in his richest and best-proportioned form. *By permission of the London County Council.*

(B) JAMES WYATT. Heveningham Hall, Suffolk (*c.* 1782). The Entrance Hall. 'Fluted-shell' fan-vaulting, and ceiling ribs repeated in the floor design. *A. F. Kersting.*

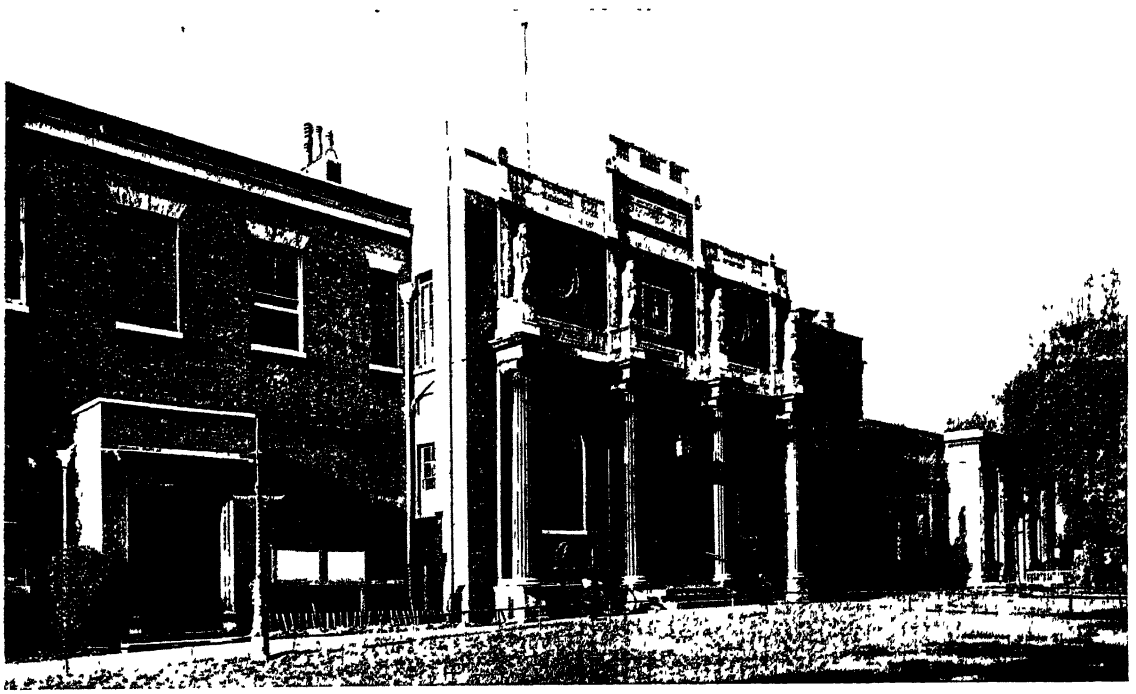
(A) Milton Manor, Berkshire (1764–72). Stephen Wright's delightful Gothic Library, deriving from Kent's simple early Gothic rather than from Strawberry Hill *A F Kersting*

(B) Heveningham Hall, Suffolk (*c.* 1782). The Wagon Room. A simplified coffered ceiling with *guilloche* border. James Wyatt's restraint in a small interior. *A. F. Kersting*

PLATE 10



(A) Attingham, Shropshire (1783–85). George Steuart's elegant but restrained façade. *A. F. Kersting.*



(B) Pitzhanger Manor, Ealing (1800–3). Sir John Soane's elaborate exterior treatment, based on the Roman triumphal arch. *A. F. Kersting.*

PLATE 11

(A) Osterley House, Middlesex (1761–80) The Library. The small-scale ornament of Robert Adam's middle period. *A. F. Kersting.*

(B) Mellerstain, Berwickshire (1770–?8). One of Adam's most beautiful libraries. The restrained ceiling is of his best middle period (1770) and has painted panels by Zucchi. *A. F. Kersting.*

PLATE 12

Among the most glorious interiors of the late eighteenth century, rivalling Heveningham and Southill, is Inveraray Castle, Argyllshire, where the little-known architect and engineer Robert Mylne (1734–1811) created the rooms (1772–82) in a castle built by Roger Morris in 1746. The beautiful ceilings, graceful gilded anthemion and foliage friezes, and painted decorations by Biagio Rebecca, are of extraordinary elegance and refined delicacy. The Wick, Richmond, Surrey (1775), is another house of Mylne's.

From 1770 onwards, the smaller houses had reflected increasingly the influence of the Adam brothers, but towards the end of the century the impress of Wyatt was seen in the use of bowed features or wings in country-houses, and very characteristically in the bow-windows of small villas or town-houses. Decoration rarely now extended beyond a classical porch or the ironwork balcony with a canopy which began to appear early in the 1780's. In small houses, the large proportion of window space to blank wall was often so naturally good as to make decoration superfluous. Brown and yellow bricks appeared now instead of red. Stucco was seen increasingly, especially with the rising costs and scarcity of building materials during the Napoleonic wars. In the south, as at Brighton, many houses were fronted with the cream coloured or black glazed 'mathematical' tiles from Hampshire which Holland used at Althorp and at the Prince of Wales's first Marine Pavilion.

In the small interiors of this time, although on a modest scale, architectural features displayed the characteristic Adamitic influences in the decoration of a fireplace or the frieze of a room with festoons of husks or a running acanthus scroll, or revealed the inspiration of Holland or Wyatt in the plainer neo-Greek recessed ornament of a key-pattern or incised lines, or in the restrained adornment of semi-circular or elliptical arches to recesses flanking a fireplace, even in the most unpretentious houses.

One of Holland's pupils, Sir John Soane (1753–1837) served him for six years, but it was his 'first revered master' George Dance, junior, who exercised the profoundest influence upon Soane throughout his career. After studying in Italy, at an early age he was appointed Surveyor to the Bank of England in succession to Sir Robert Taylor, and served in this capacity – 'the pride and boast' of his life – from 1788 to 1833. It was at the Bank that Soane executed the masterpieces of his highly individual style. In abandoning the use of classical orders – columns, pilasters, entablatures and pediments – especially for interiors, Soane continued the attempt of Dance years earlier to free architecture from the rules of Vitruvius and Palladio. By the simplification which Soane and Dance effected they anticipated much that is good in modern architecture, with its insistence that the beauty of the essential masses of a building should depend upon classical proportion and not upon ornament.

In Soane's interiors at the Bank he achieved an almost mystical effect in the abstract handling of space, with a counterpoint play of arches, vaults, and domes, and sparing ornament in the form of incised lines, sunken strips and panels, and areas of grooving.

Soane had been fascinated in Italy by the impedimenta of the Roman Empire, the tripods, urns, vases and sarcophagi with their pedimented lids and acroteria, which are piled up on Piranesi's engraved frontispieces. These elements Soane used with great prodigality on his exteriors, where he permitted himself greater richness and indulged in the use of orders.

The 'Tivoli' corner (1802) at the Lothbury angle of the Bank, with its rich Corinthian columns, heavily swagged frieze, and elaborate attic decorated with amphorae, derives from the beautiful Temple of the Sibyl at Tivoli.

At Aynho Park, Northamptonshire, where Soane made alterations (1800–2), he built the entrance in the form of an elaborate Roman triumphal arch, but his interiors in this delightful treasure-house have a contrasting cool simplicity. The rooms are almost devoid of ornament, but are given distinction and beauty by semi-circular and semi-elliptical arched recesses and curved apses, most notably in the drawing-room and the splendid library.

At Pitzhanger Manor (1800–3, now the Ealing

Public Library), which was for a time Soane's own house, the theme of the triumphal arch appears again in the gracious frontage of Ionic columns with projecting entablature carrying statues. The rooms here are in Soane's reticent interior manner, with shallow arches and plain, narrow ribbed mouldings, but there is also some restrained ornament of recessed ceiling panels with rosettes, and a charming sculptured plaque of dancing nymphs. Two of the rooms have Adam-like ceilings and scrolled friezes, and are the earlier work (1770) of George Dance, junior (Pl. 11B).

The mind of Soane is studied best of all in his own house at 12, Lincoln's Inn Fields, now Sir John Soane's Museum (1792–4), where he spent the latter part of his life, and housed his large collection of architectural casts, models and drawings, and paintings, sculpture and antiquities of many kinds, with the object of representing 'the union of architecture, sculpture and painting'. Here are displayed in the fabric itself the motifs of Soane's own designs, and in the collection an epitome of the themes of classic architecture which were used both by the ancients and by the architects of his own day. In the picture cabinet, with its hanging Gothic arches, and the breakfast room, are found some of the elements of the Picturesque which for Soane went to make up the 'poetry of architecture'.

Soane's later work, at Dulwich Art Gallery and Mausoleum, in his churches, and elsewhere, belongs to a later volume in this series. His influence on contemporaries may be seen in the affinity of his work with that of Holland and Wyatt. Much of his significance rests in the invigorating effect his severe disciplined style had upon architecture when about 1790 it lacked direction for new developments. It is very largely through Soane that Grecian classicism became established as the language of the next cycle of architecture, and that this inspiration was carried forward in the work of his pupil Smirke, and of Wilkins and Nash in the triumphs of the Greek Revival of the Regency, and up to the opening of the Victorian age.

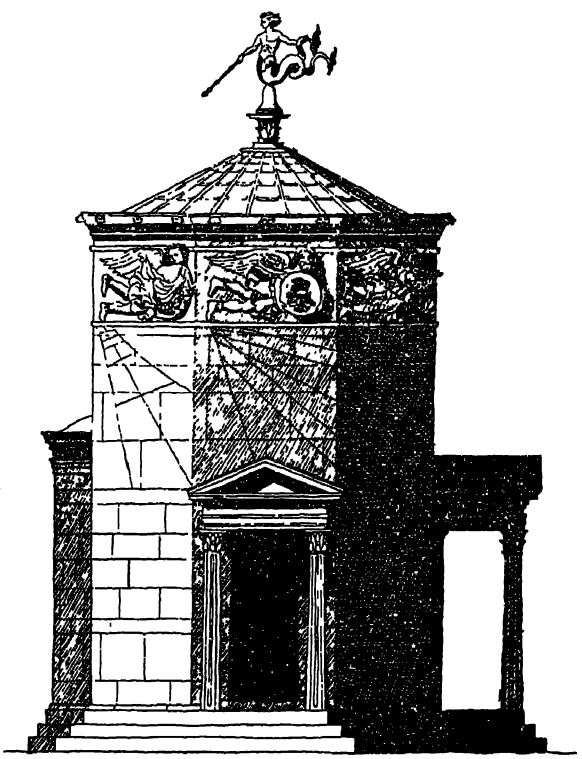


Fig. 5. The Tower of the Winds, Athens. From Stuart and Revett's *Antiquities of Athens*, 1762. Source of inspiration for James Wyatt's Radcliffe Observatory at Oxford, and other small buildings of the late eighteenth century.

Furniture

Furniture

E. T. JOY

Few students of furniture history would quarrel with the statement that the half century or so after 1760 marked the zenith of English cabinet-making. During this period the closest harmony existed between the work of the architect and that of the furniture-maker, and the skill of the craftsman was at its highest. English furniture in the neo-classical style set a European fashion, and equalled in technique the best work of the great French cabinet-makers, two facts which give point to Hepplewhite's statement in 1788 that 'English taste and workmanship have, of late years, been much sought for by surrounding nations'.

For the whole of this period furniture-making was carried on by the traditional methods of the craftsman, although wood-working machinery had been patented by Sir Samuel Bentham in the 1790's. There was, however, no simple pattern in the organization of the industry; on the contrary, since early Georgian times almost every type of industrial organization had been developing, especially in the towns, and above all, in London. This diversity is explained by the growth of specialization and the extent of the market. The village craftsman represented the unspecialized workman because his market was so limited. 'A country carpenter', wrote Adam Smith in 1776, 'deals in every kind of work that is made of wood . . . (he) is not only a carpenter, but a joiner, a cabinet-maker and even a carver in wood.' This was in marked contrast with the specialization of the town craftsmen, among whom could be found minute sub-divisions of trades. In London a cabinet-maker – to take only one class of craftsman as an example – might mean one of several things: a craftsman-shopkeeper who was responsible for the making on his own premises of the furniture which he sold to the public; or a capitalist-shopkeeper who was a dealer only, retailing furniture which he bought from outside craftsmen, and sometimes supplying it to other dealers for sale in different parts of the country and overseas; or a working master who was not a shopkeeper, but had his own workshop where he made furniture, or parts of it, for the shops and other craftsmen; or, finally, one of the numerous journeymen who either worked at home as outworkers by the piece for the shops and masters, or were wage-earners in other craftsmen's workshops. These divisions were subject to endless variations as one merged into the other.

The pre-eminence of London

It is well to emphasize the predominant position of London, not only in the size of the market and the physical output of furniture – the capital's population was a million at the census of 1811, when Manchester's, then the next largest city, was some 130,000 – but also in its leadership in styles and techniques. There were, of course, plenty of excellent craftsmen in the main provincial towns, but they looked to the capital for the latest furniture fashions, and one of the chief functions of the many design books which emanated from London in this period was to spread these new ideas (to quote Hepplewhite again) 'to many of our own Countrymen and Artizans

whose distance from the Metropolis makes even an imperfect knowledge of its improvements acquired with much trouble and expense'. Ever since Defoe's day there had been a noticeable tendency for some London furniture shops to grow in size. In the second half of the eighteenth century St Paul's Churchyard began to lose some, but by no means all, of its reputation as the main centre for high-quality furniture, for many of the fashionable shops were now to be found in the Covent Garden, St Martin's Lane and Long Acre district, and in Soho, Old and New Bond Street, Oxford Street and Tottenham Court Road, where they were close to the newer residential areas. Some shops where the furniture was made on the premises under the control of a craftsman were of a large size and resembled in a way a departmental store. Such, for example, was the well-known shop of George Seddon in Aldersgate Street (not, it will be noted, in one of the fashionable areas just mentioned) which was described by a German visitor, Sophie von la Roche, in 1786 as a large building with six wings employing 'four hundred apprentices (i.e. journeymen) on any work connected with the making of furniture'.[1] The stock of the firm, including carpets, wood and mirrors (which were cast and cut in the basement) was valued at nearly £119,000 in 1789, shortly after the above description was written.

Even in the case of the smaller shops the nature of the work must have made the craftsmen in charge more business men than craftsmen. Chippendale, for instance, travelled so much about the country to attend to customer's requirements, which often included the fitting up of a whole house, that he could not possibly have had time to see personally to the work being carried out in his workshop. This means that much of the fine furniture which came from the better-known shops was made, not by the craftsman whose name appeared on the bill, but by the foreman and band of highly-skilled, unknown workmen – carvers, inlayers, chair-makers, upholsterers, etc. – to whom the real credit should go.

[1] *Sophie in London*, 1786 (trans. by C. Williams, 1933).

Little is known in detail of the other kinds of shops which were run by dealers, but it is clear that there were very many of them in London doing a considerable business. Mortimer's *Universal Director* of 1763, which was the first London directory to classify trades, stated that its list of cabinet-makers 'contains only such as either work themselves, or employ workmen under their direction; and that not one of those numerous Cabinet Warehouses which sell ready-made Furniture bought of the real artist, is to be met with in this work'. The general scope of the work of these dealers is illustrated by the handbill of Wilkinson & Sons who kept a 'Cabinet, Upholstery, Carpet and Looking-Glass Warehouse' in Cheapside. This bill (in the Guildhall Collection, dated 1779) advertises that the shop 'keeps ready made in the most genteel taste' a very wide range of goods which are given in detail, including such items as 'library, writing, ladies' dressing, Pembroke, dining, card and tea tables' and 'cabriole, japand, dyed and Windsor chairs'. The statement concludes: 'N.B. Merchants, Captains and others may be supplied with the above Goods at the most Reasonable Rates,' indicating that these shops were one of the channels through which furniture and upholstery were sent from London to distant parts of the country and overseas.

London cabinet-ware exports reached all parts of the world with which we had trading relations, foreign countries as well as British colonies. In 1800 the total value of British furniture exports (mainly from London) was well over £38,000 in the official Customs returns, even though we were then at war with France; and this figure was certainly an understatement, for the real value was probably well above that given, and did not include all the furniture taken out of the country by emigrants, or the goods traded privately to India by the officials of the East India Company. It was not, of course, only dealers who sent goods abroad, for furniture from good craftsmen's shops is known to have gone to the rich planter classes in the West Indies and to North America where it was imported by rich Americans or by the cabinet-makers to copy and re-sell. This trade continued to flourish well into the nineteenth cen-

tury until it was curtailed by the increasingly heavy duties on imported timber. The English furniture industry in the Georgian period can never be divorced from its world-wide setting.

The Adam style

For a quarter of a century after 1760 the great name in furniture design was Robert Adam (1728–92). In place of the medley of styles of the early Chippendale period – the rococo, Gothic and Chinese, which were in reality variations on the same theme – he designed in the neo-classical style, and his furniture was an essential part of his scheme of treating the decoration of a house, inside and out, as a harmonious whole. In his own words in the preface to *The Works in Architecture* in 1773 he was greatly inspired by 'the grotesque . . . that beautiful light style of ornament used by the ancient Romans in the decoration of their palaces, baths and villas. . . . This classical style of ornament, by far the most perfect that has ever appeared for inside decorations . . . requires not only fancy and imagination in the composition, but taste and judgement in the application; and when these are happily combined, this gay and elegant mode is capable of inimitable beauties.' Adam's furniture in this style employed a variety of classical motifs carried out with great delicacy; among them were festoons of husks, paterae, the honeysuckle, ram's heads, vases, urns, the acanthus leaf, and medallions (Pls. 16D, 17B, 19A). These could be found carved in low relief in the solid, or, perhaps at their best, in the fine inlaid work, for which many choice coloured woods were used, particularly satinwood. Adam designed for rich patrons and the furniture was made by leading craftsmen, including Chippendale at Kenwood, Harewood House, Nostell Priory, Mersham Hatch and elsewhere, France and Beckwith at Kenwood, Linnell at Osterley, and Norman at Moor Park. Among the earliest furniture Adam is known to have designed was some for Queen Charlotte, and her beautiful bed, which originally stood in the Queen's House, now Buckingham Palace, can be seen today in the Public Dining Room at Hampton Court.

The new style did not completely sweep away the Chinese and Gothic modes, which still found a certain amount of favour; and French-style furniture continued to enjoy a vogue among the upper classes. Many cabinet-makers imported French pieces to sell to their clients or to copy – Chippendale was fined by the Customs in 1769 for alleged under-valuation of chairs which he had imported from France – and Adam complied with the demand by designing pieces, particularly upholstered chairs, with a distinctly French flavour. But his new classical style was catching on in the 1760's. 'The light and elegant ornaments,' wrote Sir John Soane in the early nineteenth century, '. . . were soon applied in designs for Chairs, Tables, Carpets, and in every other species of Furniture. To Mr Adam's taste in the Ornaments of his Buildings and Furniture we stand indebted, in-as-much as Manufacturers of every kind felt, as it were, the electric power of this Revolution in Art.' [2]

Holland and the Regency style

The inevitable reaction against the Adam style set in before the end of the century, and the changes were heralded by the work of the gifted architect and designer, Henry Holland (1745–1806). Unlike other architects, he did not make a tour of classical sites abroad, and this probably made him more receptive to new trends, especially from France, for he was also closely connected with the Whig coterie which surrounded the Prince of Wales (the future Regent and George IV), and he shared their enthusiasm for French ideas. At first he followed a modified Adam style, but later branched out into the English version of what came to be known as the French 'Directoire' style. He stressed the close adaptation of Graeco-Roman forms of decoration, and to obtain accuracy of detail he sent his draughtsman, C. H. Tatham, to Rome in 1794 to study antique classical ornament at first hand. Holland's best-known furniture designs were carried out for the Prince of Wales at Carlton House from 1784 (some of this furniture is now

[2] Sir J. Soane, *Lectures on Architecture*, 1809–36 (ed. A. T. Bolton, 1929).

at Buckingham Palace), and for Samuel Whitbread at Southill from 1795. The strength of French influence is shown by the fact that Holland employed French craftsmen at both places.[3]

This new classic style has been given the general name of 'Regency'. So far as furniture is concerned, this must remain a somewhat vague and elastic term, by no means coinciding with the actual political limits of the Regency, for while the latter lasted from 1811 to 1820, the changes in design, as has been shown, were clearly evident before the close of the preceding century. In fact, it was in 1785 that Horace Walpole saw Holland's work at Carlton House and wrote his well-known comment: 'How sick one shall be after this chaste place, of Mr Adam's gingerbread and sippets of embroidery!' We must allow that Walpole was not a friendly critic of Adam's work, but his sentiments were shared by others after the turn of the century. In 1808, for instance, C. A. Busby described Adam as 'a mannerist' and wrote: 'This ebullition of a false taste having now subsided, the latter (i.e. Adam) is considered only as an Artist of enterprize and ability.'[4] Soane's appreciation of Adam, already quoted, was noteworthy at a time when the latter's style was considered outmoded.

Holland had a sure grasp of style, and however much he was influenced by French designs, he never fell into the habit of merely copying them, but gave them an unmistakable English twist. He favoured the use of rosewood with resplendent ormolu mounts, marble tops to chiffoniers, tapered, gilded and fluted pillars, lion's legs on smaller tables, and round tops for larger tables mounted on a massive pedestal or monopodium. He also designed chairs and settees at Southill in imitation bamboo, in the Chinese fashion, and at times used Egyptian motifs, such as the lotus leaf, another characteristic of the Regency style.

[3] For Holland's furniture see D. Stroud, *Henry Holland* (1950), and F. Watson's chapter in *Southill: a Regency House* (1951).

[4] C. A. Busby, *A Series of Designs for Villas & Country Houses* (1808).

After Holland

While Holland was alive this new treatment was kept under control, but after his death in 1806 it began to degenerate into a somewhat narrow archaeological approach which resulted in very close copies of classical furniture, Egyptian, Greek and Roman. The pioneer of this new interpretation, which was at first founded on sound scholarship, was Thomas Hope (1769–1831), a rich banker and collector of antiques, who had had some training as an architect. In 1807 he published his *Household Furniture and Interior Decoration* in which he aimed, as he wrote in the introduction, at 'that breadth and repose of surface, that distinctness and contrast of outline, that opposition of plain and enriched parts, that harmony and significance of accessories . . . which are calculated to afford to the eye and mind the most lively, most permanent and most unfading enjoyment'. He spoke of the 'association of all the elegancies of antique forms and ornaments with all the requisites of modern customs and habits'. It is not difficult to understand how designers of the time who lacked Hope's scholarly knowledge merely imitated ancient furniture, often in a lifeless way, and these results could be seen at the very end of the period under review.

The ideas behind all these changes in design after about 1785 were well expressed by Archibald Alison in his *Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste*, which were first published in 1790 and reached their sixth edition in 1825. He stressed the importance of delicacy and straight lines: 'All Furniture . . . is Beautiful in proportion to its quantity of Matter, or the Fineness or Delicacy of it. Strong and Massy Furniture is everywhere vulgar and unpleasing . . . progress terminates in that last degree of Delicacy and even of Fragility, which is consistent either with the nature of the Workmanship or the preservation of the Subject.' The models should be 'the Forms of Grecian or Roman Furniture . . . in scarcely any of them is the winding or serpentine Form observed; . . . on the contrary, the lightest and most beautiful of them are almost universally distinguished by straight or angular Lines'. All this

is typical of what we call Sheraton style furniture. Alison justified the Chinese and Gothic styles by the ideas with which they were associated. For example, Chinese furniture, 'however fantastic and uncouth the Forms in reality were . . . brought to mind those images of Eastern magnificence and splendour of which we have heard so much'. Similarly, with regard to the Gothic taste, 'this slight association was sufficient to give Beauty to such Forms, because it led to ideas of Gothic manners and adventure'.

The design books

The architect-designers worked for a relatively small clientèle and designed furniture of high quality. The translation of their styles into general furniture, including quite humble pieces, was accomplished by the authors of design books which were intended, as Hepplewhite wrote, to be 'useful to the mechanic and serviceable to the gentleman'. Chippendale's *Director* of 1754 had been the first of such furniture catalogues to be published by a cabinet-maker and not by a builder, artist or architect, and it was followed by many others. At the end of the decade 1760–70 the neo-classical style began to appear in such publications. At first the mid-century fashions set by Chippendale, the third edition of whose *Director* appeared in 1762, were continued in Ince and Mayhew's *Universal System of Household Furniture* (1759–63) and in various works by Matthias Lock, Robert Manwaring (who specialized in chair designs) and others. But in 1769 Lock, who was a carver as well as designer, and had been the pioneer of the rococo in England, showed his versatility by publishing two works, the *New Book of Pier Frames* and the *New Book of Foliage* which contained the first engraved designs of furniture in the Adam style. What really popularized the new mode, however, was Hepplewhite's *Guide* of 1788, published two years after the author's death. With nearly 300 designs, covering all kinds of furniture, it illustrated admirably how the application of Adam's principles, 'the latest or most prevailing fashion', could 'unite elegance and utility, and blend the useful with the agreeable'. Designs similar to Hepplewhite's appeared in the *Cabinet-Makers' London Book of Prices*, also published in 1788; many of the plates for this had been designed by Thomas Shearer, who re-issued them under his own name as *Designs for Household Furniture* in the same year.

The changes at the end of the century were interpreted in Thomas Sheraton's famous *Drawing Book*, published in parts between 1791–4. It reflected the emphasis on light and delicate furniture, the making of which required a very high standard of skill from the craftsmen; in fact, the furniture of this particular period can properly be considered among the most technically perfect ever made in this country. Sheraton also published a *Cabinet Dictionary* in 1803, and the first volume of an unfinished *Encyclopaedia* in 1805. The latter, however, showed signs of the deterioration which was then beginning to mark furniture design. Hope's publication of 1807, already referred to, differed from the others in that it was not the work of a craftsman. His principles were generally applied to furniture in 1808 by George Smith, a cabinet-maker, in his *Household Furniture*. Smith did not possess Hope's scholarship, and he lost some of the spirit in which Hope's interpretations were made.

Leading cabinet-makers

Some of these designers were also craftsmen of great repute in their own day, but this by no means applied to all of them. Among the names in the above list, those of Chippendale, Hepplewhite and Sheraton are household words, and will remain so. Their fame, however, is due to their well-advertised skill as designers and to the very convenient way in which their names can label the furniture of their period, rather than to their supremacy as craftsmen. Chippendale was certainly responsible for fine pieces, but he had no royal appointment and it is a curious fact that his best work was done, not in the styles of his own *Director*, but in the quite different Adam style. Hepplewhite does not seem to have enjoyed any great reputation as a furniture-maker. As for Sheraton, who died in poverty, there is no evidence that he ever had a workshop of his own.

Many contemporary craftsmen of outstanding

worth have been unfairly overshadowed by these designers. In the 'sixties flourished the great partnership of William Vile and John Cobb; Vile, indeed, did work in the rococo style in its later phase here which surpassed that of Chippendale. When the neo-classical style took root, outstanding pieces, in addition to Chippendale's (already noted), were produced by William Gates and John Linnell. At the end of the century and just after, prominent names were those of William Marsh, Thomas Tatham (these last two were partners for a time), Thomas Chippendale the younger, and George Oakley. On the other hand, among those who published design books we find that the partners Ince and Mayhew ranked highly as craftsmen, and so did George Smith, who had royal appointments in the early nineteenth century. Two long-lived firms, those of Gillow and Seddon, were also widely known throughout this period.

Decoration

Several new forms of decoration, and revivals of older ones, appeared on furniture during this period. And one traditional decorative craft, that of the carver, though strongly evident for most of the period, was decaying in the early nineteenth century. In 1761 J. Collyer described carvers as 'ingenious men . . . never out of business', but in 1813, T. Martin, author of *The Circle of the Mechanical Arts*, wrote thus: 'Carving in wood has long been in the background, as a branch of the arts. . . . There are now only eleven master carvers in London, and about sixty journeymen (though at one time there were six hundred); many of the latter are now very old. They make no shew of their work, and live in private houses.'

One feature of the Adam style was the revival of marquetry in the form of fine inlaid work (Pl. 16D, 18C). This was similar in technique to the marquetry of the walnut period, but differed from it in emphasizing classical decoration. Towards 1800 this kind of decoration gradually gave way to the simpler form of 'stringing', by which a thin line of wood or, more particularly at the end of this period, brass, was inlaid on the furniture (Pl. 15B, 18A). This change, and the reasons for it, was thus described by Sheraton in 1803: – 'Inlaying, in cabinet-making, was much in use between twenty and thirty years back; but was soon laid aside, as a very expensive mode of ornamenting furniture, as well as being subject to speedy decay. The present mode of inlaying with brass, is most durable and looks well let into black woods of any kind.' This brass work is a characteristic feature of furniture at the turn of the century, and set off the dark glossy and striped woods which became popular after the decay of carving and inlay.

There were new developments in metal mounts. When Matthew Boulton, the industrial pioneer and partner of James Watt, opened his famous factory at Soho, near Birmingham, in 1762, he began to manufacture ormolu mounts, finely chased, and of a rich, golden colour. Boulton always aimed at a high artistic standard in his products, and was influenced by Adam's work. Samuel Smiles, in his life of Boulton and Watt, quotes Lord Shelburne as writing to Adam that 'he (i.e. Boulton) is very desirous of cultivating Mr Adam's taste in his productions'. In the last quarter of the century a new method of manufacturing back-plates for drawer handles came into use. In 1777 two Birmingham brass-founders, John Marston and Samuel Bellamy, improved upon John Pickering's invention of 1769 by patenting a method of stamping ornaments on plated metal for cabinet furniture.[5] The plates of brass were moulded by dies, and were usually circular, oval or octagonal in shape (Pl. 16B). About 1800 another form of handle appeared: small brass knobs, many in the shape of a lion's head with a ring through the mouth. Turned mahogany knobs were also used (Pl. 17A).

The vogue for lighter and more delicate furniture led to a revival of three fashionable late seventeenth-century features which had undergone a more or less total eclipse: turning, cane work, and japanning. Turned legs on chairs and tables, of slender proportions and often fluted, were in great favour (Pl. 14C and D, 16B).

[5] Patent Office Library, Old Series of Abridgements of Specifications, Class 39, Furniture & Upholstery, 1620–1866 (1869).

Fig. 1. Turned and reeded chair-leg.

Fig. 2. Spiral twist chair-leg.

Sheraton also shows turned and reeded legs (Fig. 1) on some of his pieces, and about 1800 spiral-twisted turning could be found on chair legs and backs (Fig. 2), and as columns at the corners of chests of drawers. As for cane work and japanning, these went together, as Sheraton himself pointed out: 'Caning cabinet work is now more in use than it was ever known to be at any former period. About thirty years since, it was quite gone out of fashion . . . But on the revival of japanning furniture it began to be gradually brought into use, and to a state of improvement.' This later method of japanning, however, was much inferior to the original process; it was merely paint and varnish, even in the case of the well-known bedroom suite for Garrick at Hampton. At the end of the century it was often used for brightly coloured patterns (Pl. 14D).

Woods: mahogany

The extensive character of British trade enabled the cabinet-makers of the later Georgian period to take their pick of the world's choicest furniture woods. The outstanding wood was mahogany from the West Indies and Central America, and the most important event in the history of the mahogany trade was the Act of 1721 (8 Geo. I, c. 12) which freed timbers grown in the British plantations in America (including the West Indies) from their former heavy import duties. In 1750 the value of imported mahogany, which included wood smuggled from Spanish colonies via Jamaica to avoid the duties on foreign timbers, was nearly £30,000, compared with £221 in 1721. So important had the trade become that in 1770 the Government, at the instigation of Customs officials, passed another Act (11 Geo. III, c. 41) extending this freedom from duty to all American timbers, foreign and British alike, as mahogany – so ran the preamble of the Act – had 'become very useful and necessary to cabinet-makers' and further supplies would encourage increased exports of furniture from Britain. In 1792 the import value was £79,554, and in 1800, despite the war with France and the re-imposition of duties, £77,744. The quantity represented by these last two sums was in each case well over 7,000 tons. After about 1750 the Cuban variety of mahogany, easier to work, richly coloured, and often with a range of beautiful figures (among them 'fiddle-backs', 'roes', and 'curls') began to replace the earlier San Domingo variety, which was harder and denser, and had little figure. In the later part of the century mahogany from Honduras (often called 'baywood') was popular; it was lighter in both colour and weight, and was sometimes used as a carcase for Cuban veneers, though for this purpose red deal, imported from North America, was commonly employed. In the figures quoted for import values in 1792 Honduras mahogany accounted for nearly £46,000 of the total, and in Sheraton's day it was 'the principal kind of mahogany in use among cabinet-makers'.

Satinwood and rosewood

Towards the end of the century two other woods were in demand for the best quality furniture: satinwood and rosewood. Satinwood was imported from both the West and East Indies, and its light yellow colour and fine figure, which showed up beautifully under polish, made it ideal for the delicate pieces of the period. It was used mainly as a veneer on case furniture (Pl. 18C), though some work in the solid (chairs and tables) was evident about 1800. Rosewood was particularly important after 1800; heavy, dense, and marked with dark streaks, it set the current fashion for dark, glossy woods, and its use was

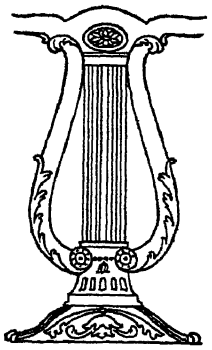


Fig. 3. Lyre back of chair.

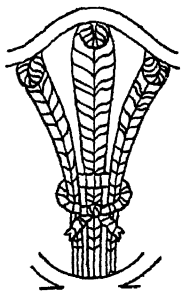


Fig. 4. Prince of Wales' feather back of chair.

encouraged by the opening of direct trade with South America, where the chief source of supply was Brazil, during the Napoleonic Wars. It would be incorrect to assume that these woods supplanted each other in turn, as mahogany had supplanted walnut; it would be more accurate to say that one was more fashionable than the others at particular times, for fine furniture. In general terms it may be said that towards the end of this period mahogany was used for the best furniture in dining-rooms, bedrooms and libraries, and satinwood and rosewood in drawing-rooms and boudoirs. But it can be noted that in 1810 cabinet-makers were still defined in *Crosby's Pocket Dictionary* as 'workers in mahogany and other fine woods'.

Other woods

Many timbers besides those mentioned were in demand for their colour or figure. Fustic, long imported from the West Indies for dyeing, enjoyed a temporary popularity in cabinet work after about 1770 because of its yellow colour, but it fell into disuse when it was found to fade to a dead brownish hue. Various beautiful shades of brown and red, light and dark, were provided by exotic woods like calamander from Ceylon, coromandel from India, thuya from Africa, kingwood, partridge wood, purple wood, zebra wood and tulip wood all from Brazil, and amboyna from the West Indies. All these could be found as veneers or decorative bandings. It was the great demand for veneers with striped figure which explains the particular use of many of these woods after 1800. Cheaper foreign woods which were imported included red cedar from North and Central America for boxes and drawer linings, and red deal from North America which, after 1750, began to replace yellow deal from the Baltic for carcase work.

English timbers were used considerably by leading cabinet-makers, and were by no means confined, as is sometimes supposed, to country craftsmen. Some native woods resembled the more expensive foreign varieties. Suitably figured pieces of birch and chestnut, for instance, could be used as substitutes for satinwood; acacia was used instead of tulip wood; and ebony, which had been imported since the sixteenth century for its black colour, was not now in such demand, since it could be imitated by staining close-grained woods like pear and willow for the 'ebonized' stringing on Regency pieces. Sycamore, stained to give a greenish-grey colour, and known as silver-wood or harewood, was often used as a veneer on late eighteenth-century work. Without such refinements, these and other native woods were found on the simple but attractive furniture made by country craftsmen or by cabinet-makers in the smaller towns, in imitation of better quality work. For painted furniture beech was usually employed, but plane was often substituted for this in country areas. And in the traditional craft of Windsor chair-making elm for the seat, beech or ash for the spindles, and yew for the frame continued to be frequently used.

Fashionable furniture: chairs

Under Adam's influence chairs were lighter and more graceful than those of the rococo period. Characteristic features were straight legs which tapered from knee blocks at the level of the seat rail to feet ending on small plinths, delicate classical motifs carved, inlaid, or painted, and a graceful outline for the backs. The latter had many variations; oval, shield and heart shapes became fashionable, but the rectilinear form was also in use, as, for example, on some early specimens of about 1775 which had lyre-shaped splats (Fig. 3). Where carving was employed it usually took the form of delicate channelling or fluting on the back frame, carved oval paterae on the knee blocks,

fluting on the tapered legs, and continuous moulding along the seat edge. Adam's upholstered chairs closely followed French models, and he used beautiful materials like brocades and tapestries for upholstering both backs (which were oval in shape) and seats. The latter were overstuffed, but showed the lower part of the seat frames clear, and these were often decorated with gadrooning. Sometimes chairs of this kind had serpentine-curved front legs ending on scroll feet, the last version of the cabriole leg, and had arms with padded tops, covered with the same material as backs and seats (Pl. 13).

As can be expected, oval, shield and heart shapes figured prominently on the chair designs in Hepplewhite's *Guide*, and in many cases the splats were not connected with the back of the seats. Hepplewhite's name is particularly associated with the shield back and the familiar Prince of Wales' feathers (Fig. 4), but he designed many other fillings for his backs, including leaves, drapery, wheat-ears, vases and honeysuckle, and he by no means neglected rectilinear backs. The legs were generally of square section and tapered slightly to plinth feet. Many of the supports of the arms of both Adam and Hepplewhite chairs had a common feature in that they did not rise from the side rails of the seat, but continued from the front legs to just above the seat, and then swept backwards in a pronounced curve to straighten out at the arm-rests, which joined the back of the chair about half-way up. (For these details see Pl. 14A and B.)

A great variety of designs was found on chairs of the Sheraton style, but the emphasis was decidedly on backs of rectangular shape. Some cresting rails were turned; others were wide and flat and overran the uprights, and were curved for the sitter's back – this was a novel design very characteristic of chairs of about 1800. The backs were left as open as possible; the fillings took many forms – sometimes a single cross rail, or, when splats were used, trellis bars, pierced circles between pairs of bars, or a panel of cane set in a small frame. Painted chairs usually had bright designs on a black background, turned legs, and seats of cane. A feature of front legs was that they were often shaped in concave curves and tapered gradually to the floor without any special foot design. It was another characteristic of chairs of this time that their arms swept up in a pronounced S-curve to join the back uprights close to the cresting rail. Stringing, the delicate, thin lines of wood or brass, could be found on the broad types of cresting rails. In general, this period was distinguished for the delicacy of its chair design, but the lightness was soon to be lost in the heavier decoration of the Regency style. (Sheraton chairs, Pl. 14C and D.)

Settees followed the same main trends as chairs; they must, however, be carefully distinguished from sofas or couches which were popular at the time. Settees were extensions of armchairs, while couches were descendants of day-beds, and were used for reclining. The couch of classical design figured very prominently in the Regency period (Fig. 5).

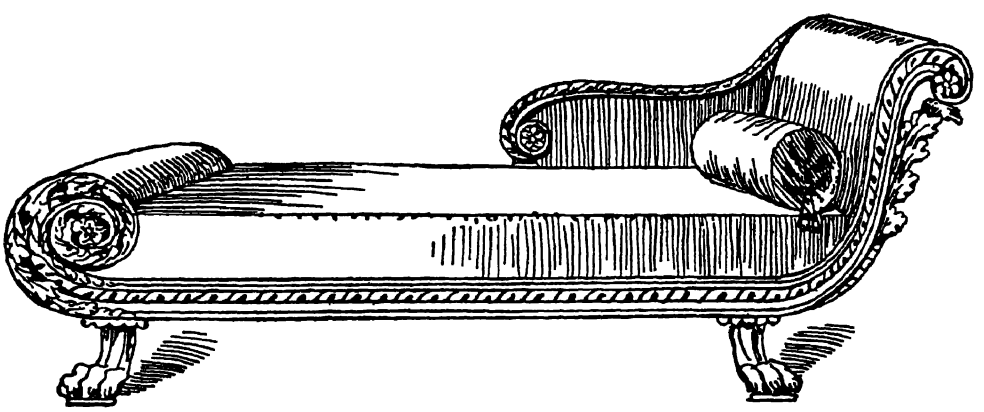


Fig. 5. Late eighteenth-century couch.

Chests of drawers, commodes, tallboys

Chests of drawers of the old plain rectangular form continued to be made after 1760, but often with five or six drawers, and thus somewhat taller than the earlier ones. Many were made of mahogany, either solid or veneered; in the latter case, it was usual to have a carcase of red deal and drawer linings of oak. A general feature of this type was the cock bead round the drawer edge; in fact, this form of moulding, which was introduced during the walnut period, was almost exclusively used throughout the century after about 1745. Some low chests of drawers had the top drawer hinged at the bottom so that it could be opened as a writing flap, and the drawer itself could be pulled forwards. This construction succeeded the writing slide which had been fitted above the top drawer of many chests in the earlier part of the century, and which was pulled out with small loop handles. After 1770 French influence could be seen on these plainer pieces in the form of a delicate outward curving of the feet, instead of the square bracket feet.

But it was in the development of commodes that the French taste was most marked. These pieces stood in reception rooms or the best bedrooms and were often elaborately decorated. Pl. 15A shows a remarkably fine specimen of this kind of about 1765. In the Adam period outstanding examples were made of satinwood inlaid with various woods and decorated with a variety of classical motifs, or with figures and scenes from classical mythology, all worked with the greatest skill. Among them is the famous 'Diana and Minerva' commode supplied by Chippendale, almost certainly to Adam's design, for Harewood House in November, 1773. The inlay work on this piece is superb, particularly on the concave surface of the knee-hole, and the veneers, which are still in excellent condition, illustrate the extraordinary care with which cabinet-makers chose their woods for work of this kind.

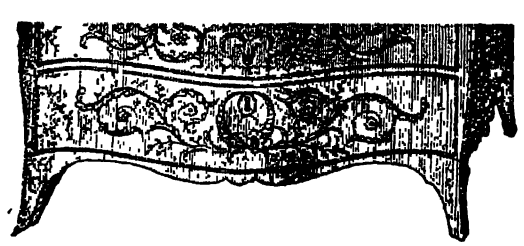


Fig. 6. Apron piece of bow-fronted chest of drawers.

After 1775 many chests of drawers were bow- or serpentine-fronted (Fig. 6). Reeded quarter columns were sometimes found on the front corners, and spirally turned feet were fashionable. Stringing in wood or brass was used as a decoration for drawer fronts in the Sheraton period, another distinctive feature of which was the exceptionally wide frieze above the top drawer.

Tallboys or chests-on-chests continued to follow the main developments of the plainer chests of drawers, but they were gradually going out of fashion in the later part of the eighteenth century owing to the inconvenient height of the upper drawers. In the final phase, some bow-fronted ones were made.

Sideboards

One interesting development in this period was the emergence of the sideboard, and credit for this new piece is now generally given to Robert Adam. 'A side Board table in the dining-room' appears among Adam's designs for Kenwood in the *Works in Architecture* of 1773. This shows the first stage in the arrangement of the sideboard – a side table flanked by two detached pedestal cupboards supporting urns (Pl. 16D). Later the two pedestals were joined directly to the table to form one complete unit. The urns were retained and were used as knife boxes, and drawers were fitted to the table and in some cases to the pedestals (Fig. 7). Finally, the sideboard in its more modern shape appeared; the pedestals were replaced by smaller cupboards or drawers, supported on turned or tapered legs (these were six or eight in number), the table continued to hold drawers, and the whole piece was bow- or serpentine-fronted (Pl. 16C). The urns were now discarded, and the central bay below the table top was often designed to allow space for a wine cooler, which was made in the same style as the rest of the sideboard. In the Sheraton period some beautiful smaller sideboards were made, often serpentine-fronted, and with characteristic

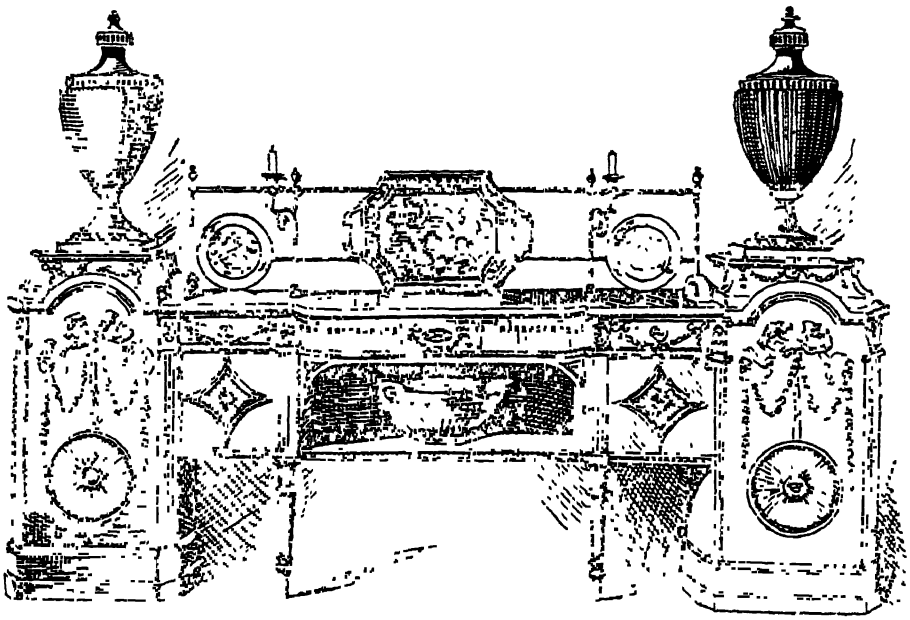


Fig. 7. Adam sideboard, second half of eighteenth century.

turned and reeded legs. As a piece of furniture the sideboard quickly achieved popularity; 'the great utility of this piece,' wrote Hepplewhite, 'has procured it a very general reception.' Many were fitted at the back with a brass rail for displaying the family plate.

Early in the nineteenth century the sideboard lost its general lightness and there was a revival of the earlier type of pedestals and table. Urns were not used, but the pedestals were heavier in design than the earlier variety. The cupboards in all types were used for storing the various appurtenances of the dining-room, and sometimes they were lined with metal to keep plates hot, to hold wine bottles, or even to contain water for rinsing. A vivid light on the social habits of the time is thrown by the revelation that they also contained what a foreign visitor, Louis Simond, a Frenchman long domiciled in the United States, delicately described during his visit to England in 1810–11 as 'a certain convenient piece of furniture, to be used by anybody who wants it'. The reasons for its presence can best be left to Simond's own words: 'I once took the liberty to ask why this convenient article was not placed out of the room, in some adjoining closet; and was answered, that, in former times, when good fellowship was more strictly enforced than in these degenerate days, it had been found that men of weak heads or stomachs took advantage of the opportunity to make their escape shamefully, before they were quite drunk; and that it was to guard against such an enormity that this nice expedient had been invented. I have seen the article in question regularly provided in houses where there were no men, that is, no master of the house; the mistress, therefore, must have given the necessary orders to her servants.' [6]

Tables

Tables varied so much in size that they are best considered in three categories – small tables, dining tables and tripod tables. In addition to the side tables which were components of the early sideboards, the Adam period saw the development of variously shaped small tables – tops, semi-circular

[6] L. Simond, *Journal of a Tour & Residence in G. Britain, 1810–11* (1817).

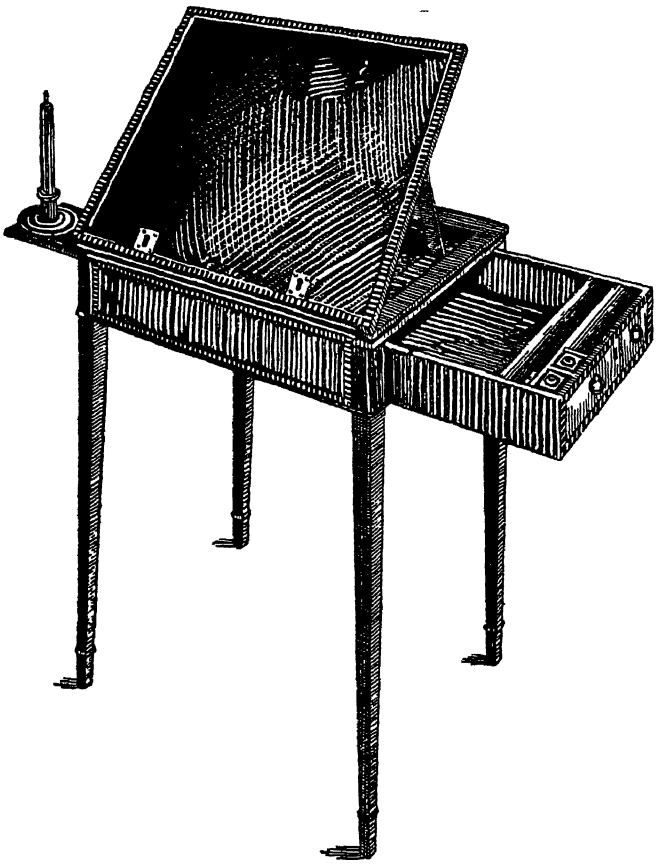
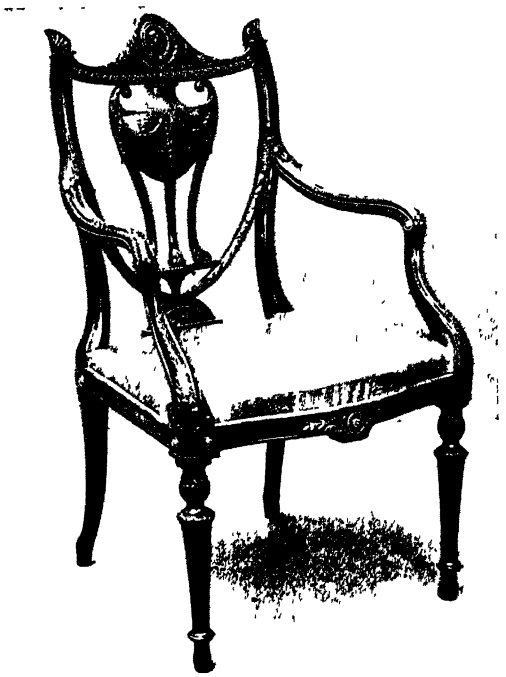


Fig. 8. Sheraton writing table.

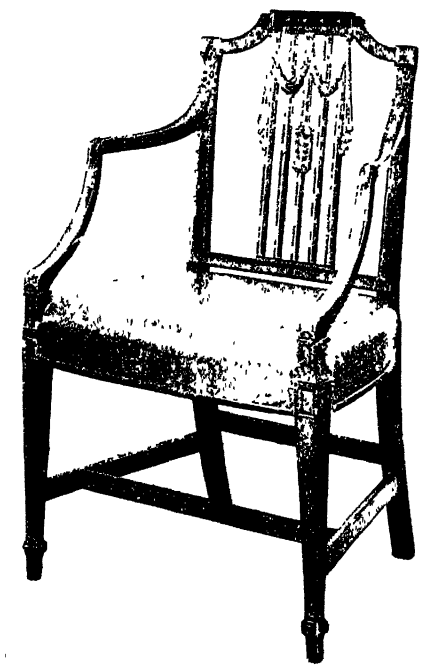
when closed, were popular – for tea-drinking, card-playing, writing, dressing, or as pier and console (Pl. 16A) tables. On all the classical ornaments might be carved, inlaid, or painted. These tables usually had either square or turned tapering legs, often fluted, or slender French cabriole legs with knurl or scroll feet. Early in the Adam period the Pembroke table began its long vogue. This type had two flaps (usually semi-circular) and often a drawer (which might be at one end only, with a dummy drawer at the other) (Pl. 16B). The Sheraton period is distinguished for the number of very delicate tables which were made. The high standard of workmanship of the time meant that such tables could be very strong despite their fragile appearance. It was the custom to stand many of these tables about the living rooms of large houses, and as some were expressly designed for ladies' use portability was an important consideration. Among them were little writing tables (Fig. 8) 'finished neat, in mahogany or satinwood', work tables with ingenious arrangements of drawers and sliding tops, and nests of tables. From the Pembroke table developed the sofa table, a longer version with small end flaps, standing (unlike the Pembroke, which almost always had four tapering legs) on a pedestal foot, or on two end supports linked by a stretcher (Pl. 17A). A very typical piece of the Regency period was the round topped table for writing or for use in libraries. This was mounted either on a turned column resting on curved (and often reeded) legs, or on a solid pedestal base with claw feet. The top had a frieze with drawers, or it might be left open for books.

The Drawing Room, West Wycombe Park, Buckinghamshire, showing upholstered chairs in the French style, popular in the Adam period. *West Wycombe Park, National Trust.*

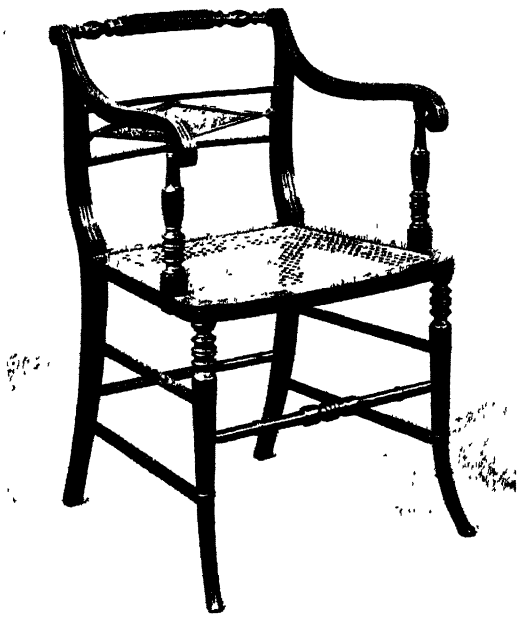
PLATE 13



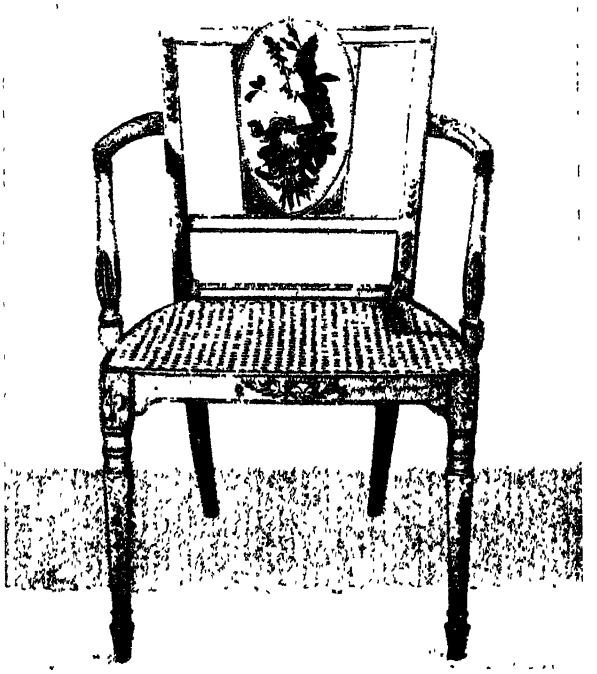
(A) Mahogany shield-back armchair, decorated with paterae and foliage in holly wood, *c.* 1870.
Earl of Yarborough Collection.



(B) Mahogany armchair, with splat work of carved drapery, *c.* 1785.

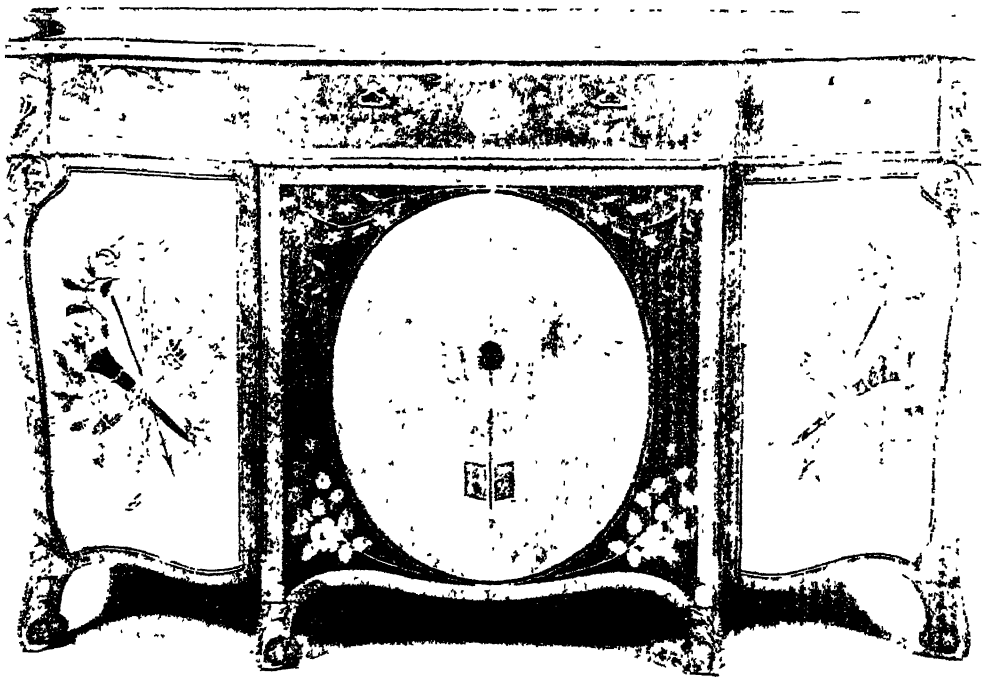


(C) Rosewood armchair, with turned front legs, stretchers, arm supports and cresting rail. Note the panel of cane in the back, *c.* 1800.

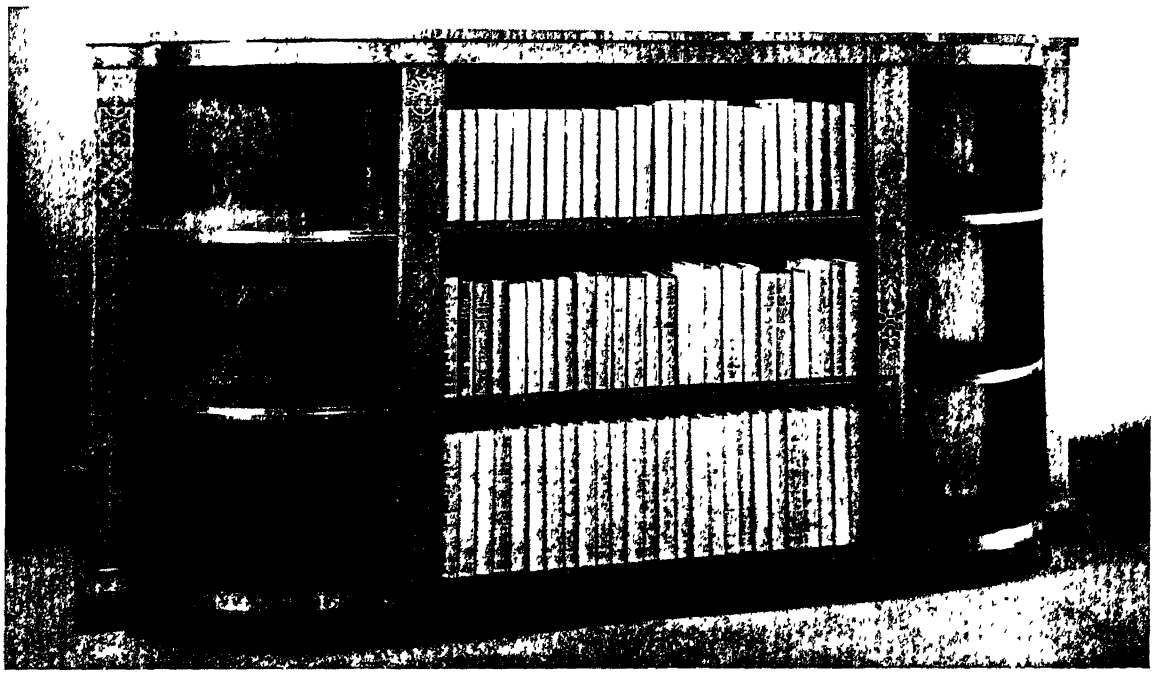


(D) Armchair with painted floral designs, turned legs and arm supports, and cane seat. *c.* 1795.
Col. J. M Wadmore Collection.

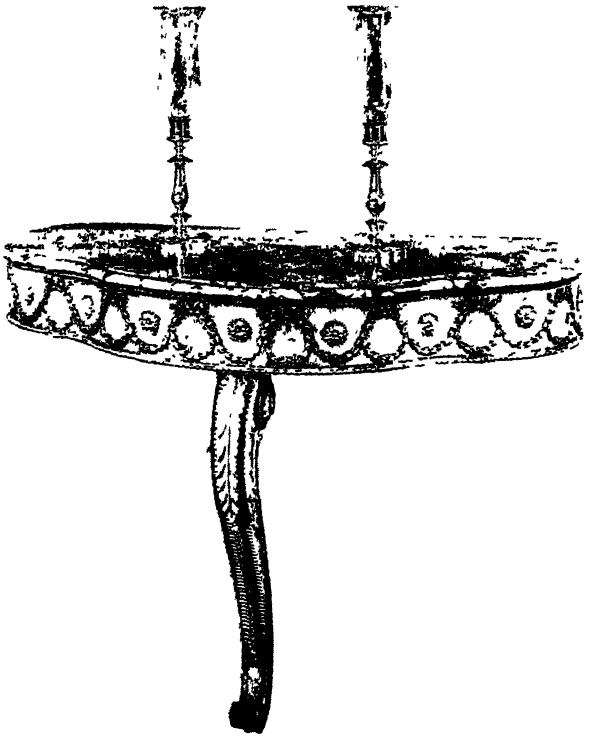
PLATE 14



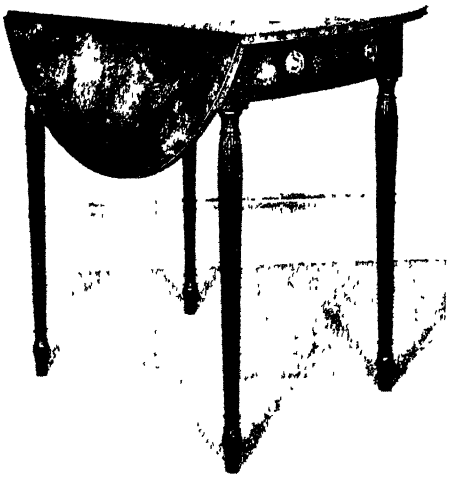
(A) Commode, veneered and inlaid with various woods, *c.* 1765. *Formerly Earl of Shaftesbury Collection*



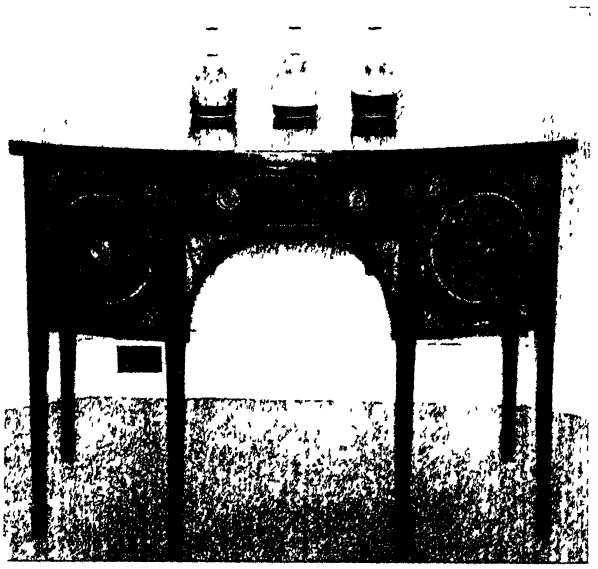
(B) Regency bookcase inlaid with brass. Its low height is due to the fashion of leaving the walls free for pictures. *Metropolitan Museum, New York.*



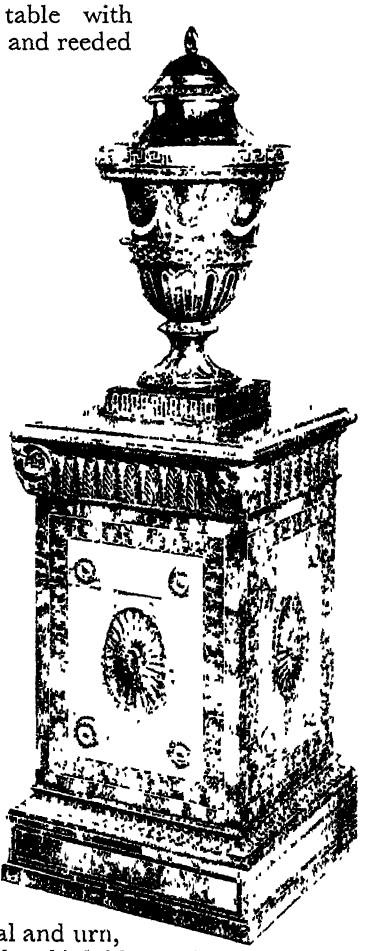
(A) Console table with marble top. The decoration is in carved wood, except for the husks which are cast in lead, a feature in vogue in the late eighteenth century. *c.* 1780.



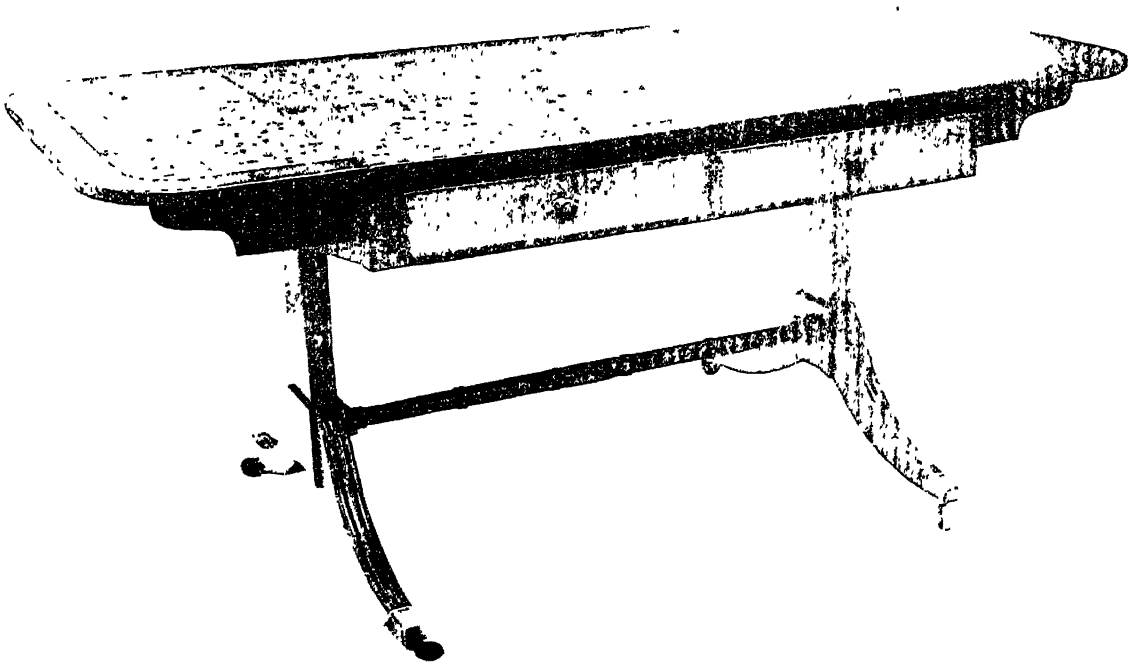
(B) Pembroke table with cross-banded top and reeded legs.



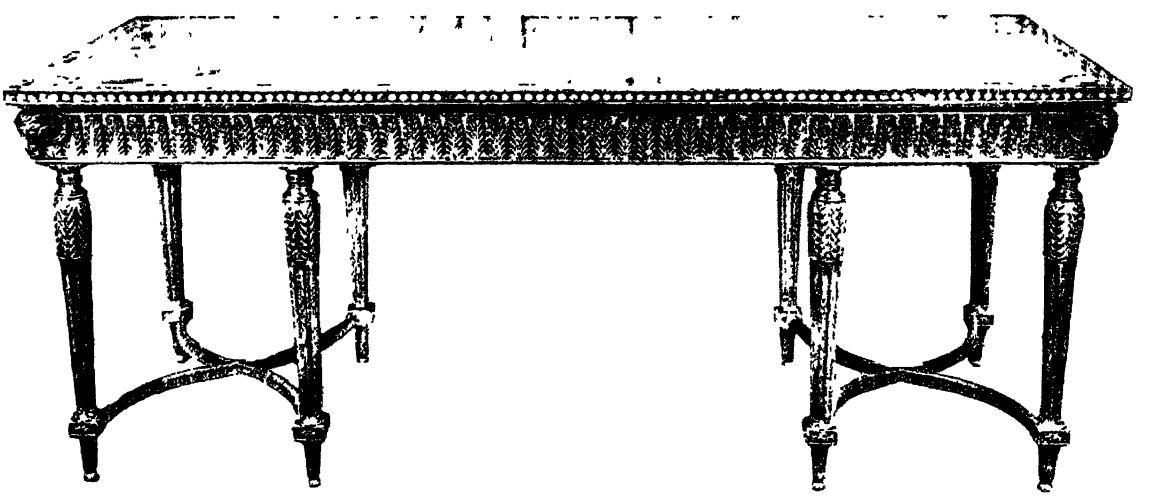
(C) Bow-fronted mahogany sideboard, with satinwood inlay, late eighteenth century.



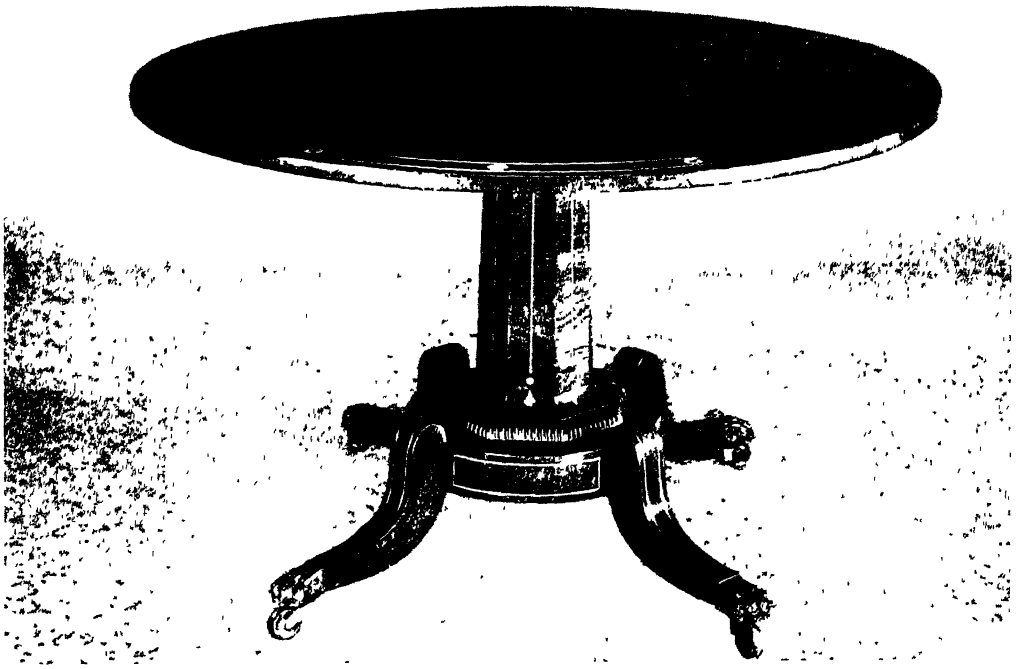
(D) Pedestal and urn, with carved and inlaid neo-classic decoratic Part of a dining-room suite, *c.* 1775.



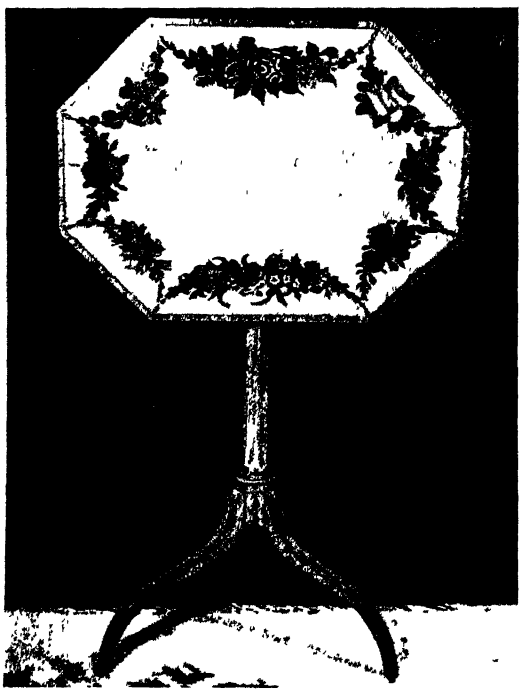
(A) Regency rosewood sofa table with curved and reeded legs, brass feet and turned stretcher.



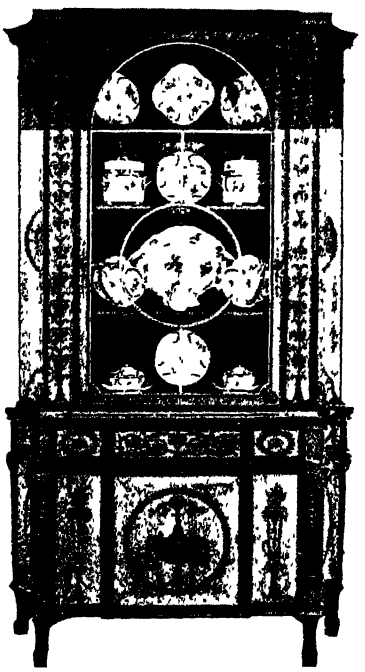
(B) Carved and inlaid mahogany side table, part of a dining-room suite, *c.* 1775.



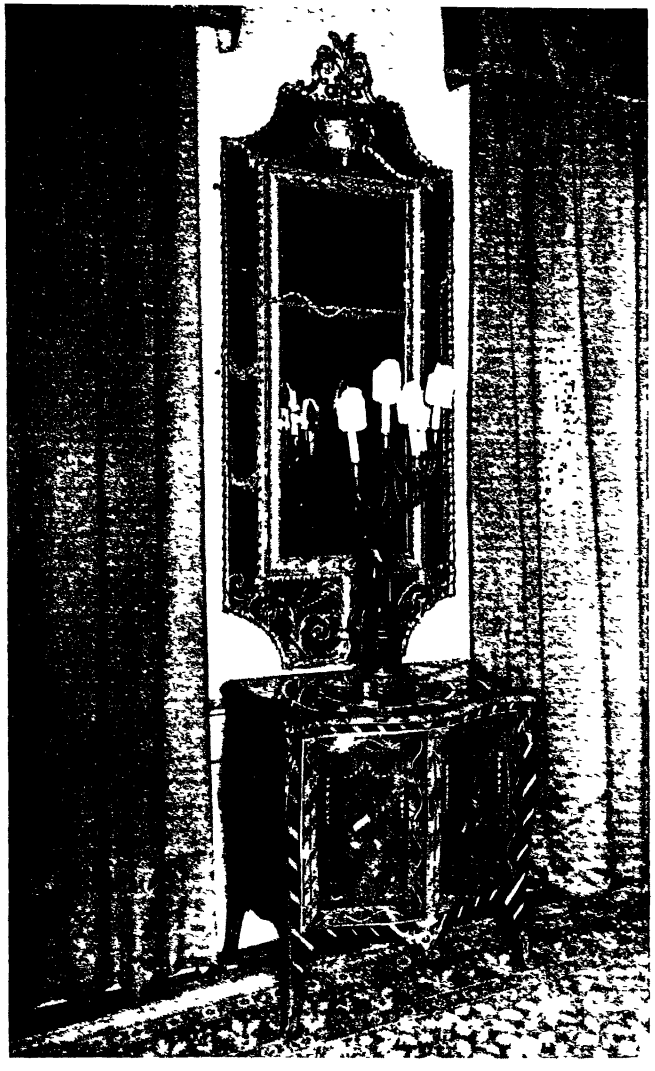
(A) Regency circular table inlaid with brass, showing the prevailing pillar and claw support



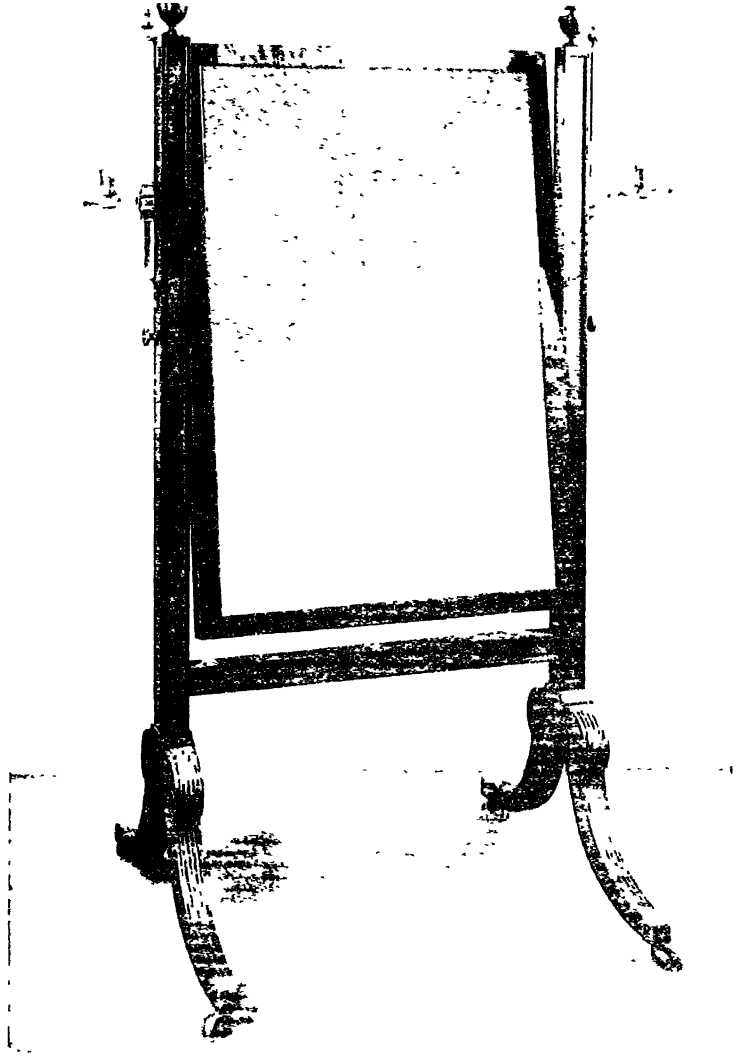
(B) Painted tripod table with hinged top and curved feet, *c.* 1795. *Col. J. M. Wadmore Collection.*



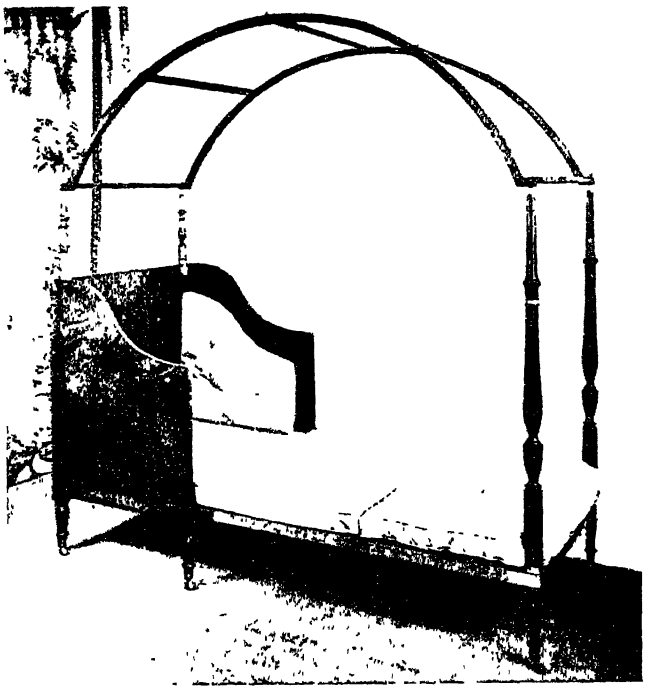
(C) Cabinet, *c.* 1770, veneered on mahogany with West Indian satinwood inlaid with neo-classical designs. Attributed to Chippendale and Haig. *Viscount and Viscountess Gage Collection at Firle Place.*



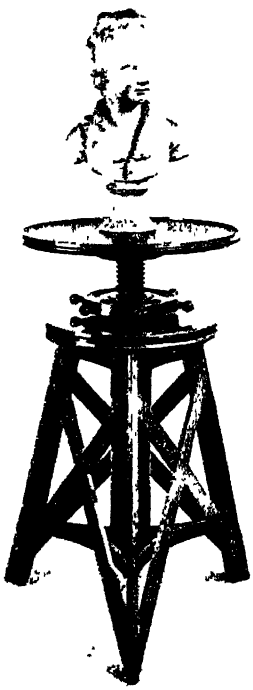
(A) Pier glass surmounted by a classical urn and leaf motif. Below, a commode, inlaid in neo-classic taste. *West Wycombe Park, National Trust.*



(B) Cheval glass with curved and reeded legs, brass feet and brass sconces, *c.* 1800.



(A) An example of portable furniture: a travelling chair bed made by Thomas Butler, *c.* 1790, and carrying his label.



(B) A sculptor's mahogany adjustable modelling table, *c.* 1775.

(C) Mahogany library wheelbarrow with shaped sides and curved arms, early nineteenth-century. *Lord Fairhaven Collection.*

For dining tables mahogany remained the favourite wood; its long planks gave both spaciousness and strength. Various forms of the gate leg were still made. One type consisted of a pair of tables each of which had a fifth leg which could be swung out to support a flap, the whole piece, when fitted up, forming a rectangle. In other examples three units were employed, two semi-circular side tables and a gate-leg table with rectangular flaps; and when a long table was needed for dining, the flaps were raised and the side tables stood at each end. When large single dining tables were used they did not look cumbersome, despite their size, for they often had tapered and fluted legs on plinth feet (Pl. 17B). Towards the end of the century some ingenious devices for extending tables were patented, among the best known of which was Gillow's 'telescopic' dining-table, with sliders that could be drawn out to hold flaps. About this time there were other distinct changes. It was usual for table tops to be supported on two or more columns each with four legs, of the kind known as 'pillar and claw'. The pillars were turned and the claws, which were at the end of curved and reeded legs, were often in the shape of lion paws and made of brass, with castors. Circular tables, similar to those described above, were also found in the dining-room, mounted on a pillar and claw (Pl. 18A).

Tripod tables were an important element in large houses after 1760, and were used for a variety of purposes, for tea, as occasional tables, and, in slightly modified forms, as candle stands and firescreens. As tea tables they were in great demand when tea-drinking in public gardens fell into disrepute among fashionable people and was carried on instead in private houses. The tops of these tables were sometimes hinged or, in some cases, could be lifted off their supports. In the neo-classic period the solid carved tops, cabriole legs, and ball-and-claw feet were gradually replaced by inlaid tops and modified forms of the cabriole. Later the tripod legs became very delicate and had clearly-defined concave or convex curves resting on dainty, pointed feet (Pl. 18B). In the case of the more elaborate firescreens and candle stands, the legs were longer and sprang from a small central platform for additional strength.

Bureaux, bookcases, cabinets, etc.

Bureaux followed closely the changes in fashion of the chest of drawers with regard to drawer fronts, feet, etc. Fronts and writing flaps, for instance, were often inlaid with classical designs under Adam's influence. Later in the century a curved apron piece often connected the legs beneath the plinth, and the legs themselves were slender and outward-pointing. About 1800 the writing flap was sometimes replaced by a sliding cylinder or tambour front. This treatment was favoured by Sheraton, who indeed claimed that he had found bureaux 'nearly obsolete in London; at least . . . among fashionable people', but that he had 'endeavoured to retrieve their obscurity by adding to them an open bookcase and modernizing the lower part'. Some of these later bureaux were made with slender legs and a single drawer under the writing section.

Where the bureau had a bookcase the latter often had a clear architectural character, as had larger bookcases, cabinets, and similar pieces. The tops were frequently decorated with a broken pediment – angular, swan-neck or curved – though this was by no means universal, for many cabinet-makers preferred a simple straight cornice. Glazing bars of mahogany were extensively used in the second half of the century, and some very graceful patterns were obtainable. In the Adam period cabinets were veneered with woods of contrasting colours (Pl. 18C). Larger pieces of this kind often had a break front, i.e. the central part was made to jut out a little. Shortly after 1800 the traditional design of the bookcase was modified; it was made to a low height so as to leave the walls above free for pictures (Pl. 15B).

Mirrors

There were considerable changes in the design of mirrors after 1760. In the middle of the century large mirrors, particularly the pier glasses which stood between windows, were perhaps the best examples of the rococo and Chinese styles in their most intricate and asymmetrical forms. The

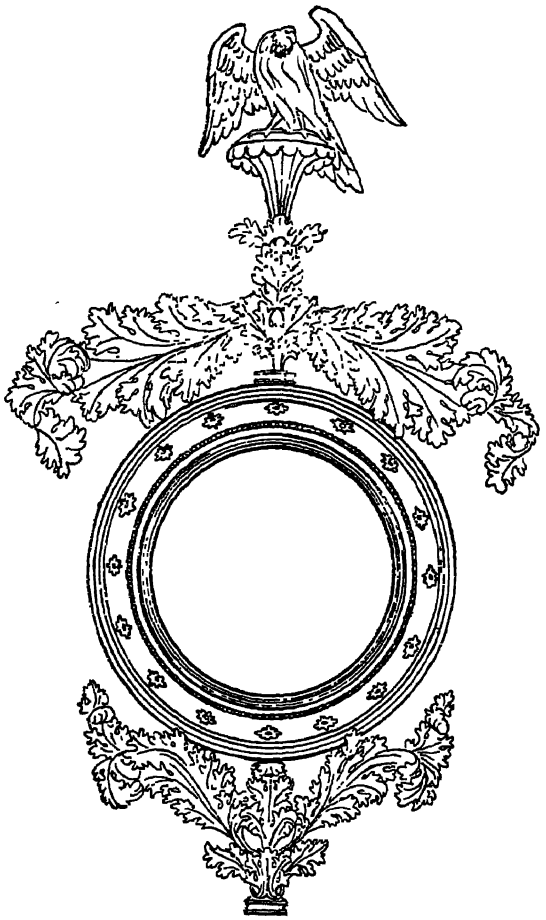


Fig. 9. Circular mirror, about 1800. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*

classical revival swept these excesses away. Large glasses now usually had rectangular frames which were carved and gilt with decorations of paterae, honeysuckle and festoons surmounted by an urn, bird, etc. (Pl. 19A). Sometimes the more delicate decoration was carried out by mounting a specially prepared composition on metal threads. Smaller mirrors were oval and rectangular and had narrow frames with surrounds and crests of open work. Carving on frames, however, was soon to be largely replaced by painted decoration.

At the end of the century came another notable change – the general introduction of convex, circular mirrors which had been used in France since the 1750's (and had indeed been illustrated in Ince and Mayhew's *Universal System*). Their frames, moulded and gilt, had a black (ebonized) fillet on the inside edge near the glass, and a reeded outer edge; the hollows of the moulding contained gilt balls. The favourite cresting above the frame was an eagle on a plinth with acanthus foliage (Fig. 9).

Dressing or toilet mirrors – little mirrors on stands fitted with drawers – provided delightful examples of fine craftsmanship. The frames, of rectangular, oval or shield shapes (Fig. 10) swung on two uprights fitted into the stand, which was often bow- or serpentine-fronted. Taller dressing glasses, known as cheval or, in Sheraton's words, 'horse dressing glasses', stood, as their name implies, on four legs. The uprights followed the prevailing modes of carving, turning or painting, and feet were reeded and curved outwards (Pl. 19B).

Long-case clocks

Though Sheraton described long-case clocks as almost obsolete in his day in London, they were still being made in the late eighteenth century, many of them with walnut veneers when this wood had become unfashionable. After 1760, however, mahogany was increasingly used, and the general tendency was to make the cases broader, the bodies shorter, and the bases heavier, and thus the slender proportions of the earlier japanned and walnut pieces tended to disappear. At first dark mahogany was in vogue, with carving and fretwork, but from about 1770 the emphasis was on finely-figured wood which was often veneered on a carcase of oak, with inlaid or painted classical designs. Small classical columns were also found at the sides of the head, and fluted and reeded pilasters at the front corners of the body. The hood was often surmounted by a broken

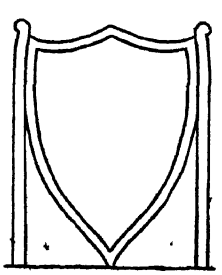


Fig. 10. Toilet mirror, shield shape.

finials (Fig. 11). At the very end of the century there was a distinct break with the traditional design, for some fine pieces had pedestal-shaped bodies, veneered with mahogany or satinwood and inlaid with various woods, and a plainer circular dial in a narrow frame, instead of a hood. An important feature of the period was the great improvement in provincial clock-making. Provincial clocks tended to be even broader than London ones, and many were made of oak.

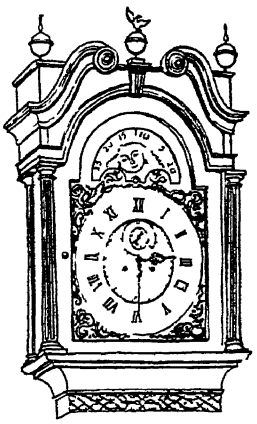


Fig. 11. Clock hood, about 1780. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*

Other furniture: country

Little enough is known about the furniture in cottages and smaller farmhouses in remoter areas of the country. In many cottages the contents must have been extremely primitive, like those seen in Devon by Louis Simond in 1810–11: 'the floors appear to be a pavement of round stones like the street, – a few seats, in the form of short benches, – a table or two, – a spinning wheel, – a few shelves.' But that cottage furniture of even a simple kind was regarded as a valuable possession is clear from the way it was put to as many uses as possible, and also handed down in the family for generations. Goldsmith, in his poem *The Deserted Village* (1770), wrote of the cottage chest which 'contrived a double debt to pay, a bed by night, a chest of drawers by day'. In the later eighteenth century furniture could be found in rural districts which dated back to early Stuart and Tudor times. In 1761, for example, Horace Walpole wrote: 'Dicky Bateman has picked up a whole cloister full of old chairs in Herefordshire – he bought them one by one, here and there in farmhouses for three and sixpence and a crown apiece. They are of wood, the seats triangular, the backs, arms and legs loaded with turnery. A thousand to one but there are plenty up and down Cheshire too.' Such chairs, collected by Georgian devotees of 'Gothic' furniture, were of a medieval pattern which rural craftsmen had continued to make well into the seventeenth century. It is clear, too, that much of the furniture in country places was made at home. This was true not only of the very poor, but also of people of more substantial station, even of the smaller gentry. At Townend, near Troutbeck, Westmorland, which for several centuries was the home of a well-to-do yeoman family, the furniture (now under the care of the National Trust) was largely the work of many generations of the family, down to the death of the last of the male line in 1914. It could also happen that some cottages contained furniture of distinctly good quality which was passed on to them from the local manor house where it had been discarded in favour of more fashionable pieces – just as the servants' quarters in large houses might have furniture formerly in the best rooms.

Provincial towns

Provincial towns had their reputable cabinet-makers who could supply all classes in the neighbourhood. Some of these craftsmen, indeed, achieved real distinction, like the Gillow family of Lancaster. Even when this firm opened a branch in London about 1760 the furniture was still made at Lancaster for a time and sent to London by sea. From their Lancaster workshop the family supplied furniture to local magnates in that part of the country – such as the Curwens at Workington Hall – where it would obviously be very difficult to get goods from London. In general, however, the upper classes obtained much of their furniture from the capital, whence, as has been seen, cheap furniture could also be supplied to the lower classes by middlemen. In the latter case, the chief consideration was geographical; most of these cheaper goods seem to have been

shipped from London as part of the coasting trade. Middle-class people in the provinces usually found local sources of supply sufficient. Parson Woodforde, in his famous diary, describes how he obtained some of the furniture for his parsonage at Weston, some ten miles from Norwich. 'Bought this day,' he wrote in November, 1789, 'of William Hart, Cabinet-Maker on Hog Hill, Norwich, 2 large second hand double-flapped Mohogany Tables, also one second hand Mohogany dressing Table with Drawers, also one new Mohogany Washing-Stand, for all which paid £4.14.6, that is, for the 2 Tables £2.12.6, Dressing Table £1.11.6, Mohogany Wash-stand £0.10.6.' Later, in April, 1793, he noted: 'About 2 o'clock this Afternoon two Men of Sudbury's at Norwich came with my Side-Board and a large New Mohogany Cellaret bought of Sudbury, brought on the Men's Shoulders all the way and very safe.' [7] This last entry is a comment on the state of the country roads at that time.

London

With regard to the furniture used by the lower and lower-middle classes in London, there are only scanty records. A pamphlet of 1767, however, gives the contents of a furnished room rented at half a crown a week by an unmarried clerk in a public office who, with a salary of £50 a year, is described as 'in a middling Station'. The room has 'a half tester bedstead, with brown linsey woolsey furniture, a bed and bolster, half flock, half feathers . . . a small wainscot table, two old chairs with cane bottoms, a small looking-glass six inches by four in a deal frame painted red and black, a red linsey woolsey window curtain'.[8] In considering furniture of this sort it is important to remember the cramped living conditions of many Londoners at that time. Lack of cheap transport kept most workers to the immediate vicinity of their places of work. Very many of them lived in furnished rooms as weekly tenants, and even the comparatively small group who reached the superior status of householders normally lived in only part of their houses and let the rest to lodgers. Landlords stocked furnished rooms with much old-fashioned furniture, and those tenants who had to provide their own furniture often bought it by weekly instalments – an old practice which remained popular right through the century. Naturally, better-class tenants could count on improved conditions. C. Moritz, a foreigner who travelled in England in 1782, wrote with appreciation of the room he had rented in London: 'I now occupy a large room in front on the ground floor, which has a carpet and matts, and is very neatly furnished; the chairs are covered with leather, and the tables are of mahogany.' [9]

This crowded way of life explains the development of what Martin in 1813 called 'the fashion of the day, to resort to a number of contrivances for making one piece of furniture serve many purposes'. The cabinet-makers' design books, which came out after 1760, had many examples of ingeniously-contrived, space-saving furniture. Some pieces of this kind were patented, such as Eckhardt's portable table and chair (1771), and Gale's bedstead which could close to look like a bookcase or wardrobe (1772). Closely related to the making of this fitted-in furniture was that of invalid furniture, in which some cabinet-makers specialized. In the early nineteenth century, for instance, Pococks of Covent Garden advertized ten different sorts of invalid furniture, including 'Patent Sympathetic and Self-Acting Dining Tables, Patent Boethema or Rising Mattresses, Merlin's Reading and Gouty Chairs, and Patent Sofa Beds' [10] (Pl. 20A).

Ships' furniture

Another line of furniture-making which is often overlooked, but which was an important one in that period of naval and commercial activity and of emigration, was the fitting up of ships'

[7] *The Diary of a Country Parson* (ed. J. Beresford, 1924–31).

[8] Considerations on the Expediency of Raising . . . the Wages of Servants that are not Domestic, particularly Clerks in Public Offices (B.M.T. 152/4, 1767).

[9] C. Moritz, *Travels in England in 1782* (1924 reprint of trans. of 1795).

[10] This advertisement appears among Foreign Office archives for Spain, 1814 (Pub. Record Office, F.O. 185/50); some of the pieces may have been used by army officers.

cabins. Some ships were very handsomely furnished. In 1768 William Hickey described the cabin of the third mate of the *Plassey* at Gravesend as 'neatness itself and most elegantly fitted up. It was painted of light pea green, with gold beading, the bed and curtains of the richest Madras chintz, one of the most complete dressing tables I ever saw, having every useful article in it; a beautiful bureau and bookcase . . . and three neat mahogany chairs, formed the furniture.' [11] This was the cabin of an officer in the merchant navy. In the Royal Navy the chief officers had good, attractive furniture designed for hard wear. Mahogany furniture, once belonging to Captain Cook, Lord Nelson and other officers can still be seen at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich. Nelson's cabin on board the *Victory* contained (as recounted by Miss Carola Oman) two black leather arm-chairs (lashed together, when necessary as a couch), an ottoman, folding bedstead, dining table, circular pedestal tables, other chairs, a sideboard, tallboy, washstand – all of mahogany.[12]

Cabin furniture was an important item for emigrants, for they normally hired only cabin space on board, and then bought furniture which they could take on shore with them. This was a regular practice with all emigrants to the colonies. In 1821 P. Cherry wrote from India to his three daughters who were intending to leave England for Madras: 'Your cabin furniture, if it has no other recommendation, is English, and will always have a value in proportion to your length of absence from England. I have now most of my cabin furniture which I bought in 1811.' He said the following were essential for the voyage: 'Two or three small bureaus with bookshelves on them, two or three sea couches with drawers to convert into sofas in the day-time, a wash-hand stand . . . a foot-tub and three chairs.' [13] The cabinet-maker's side of all this may be best summarized by quoting the trade card of Thomas Butler of the Strand, about 1800: 'Bed Furniture and Mattresses calculated for the East and West Indies. Ship Cabbins furnished. Articles particularly adapted and for Travelling and Exportation.' [14]

REFERENCES. Two indispensable works for a study of this period are the *Dictionary of English Furniture* by P. MacQuoid and R. Edwards (3 vols., revised edition by R. Edwards, 1954), and *Georgian Cabinet-Makers* by R. Edwards and M. Jourdain (revised edition 1955). The quotations from Hepplewhite and Sheraton in the text are taken from, respectively, the *Guide* (1788) and the *Cabinet Dictionary* (1803), except Sheraton's reference to writing tables (from the *Drawing Book*, 1791–4).

[11] *Memoirs of William Hickey* (ed. A. Spencer, 1913).
[12] C. Oman, *Nelson* (1950).
[13] Quoted by Sir M. Malcolm, *Annals of an Anglo-Indian Family* (undated).
[14] Sir A. Heal, *London Furniture Makers, 1660–1840* (1953).

Wood engraving by Richard Austin for Bell & Stephenson's Type Specimen, 1789.

The printed handbill of a late eighteenth-century provincial craftsman. From R. W. Symonds' *Furniture Making in seventeenth and eighteenth-century England.*

Painting and Sculpture

Painting and Sculpture

HUGH HONOUR

> 'Our eloquence and the glory of our arms have been carried to the highest pitch. The more peaceful arts have in other countries generally attended national glory. If there are any talents among us, this seems the crisis for their appearance: the Throne itself is now the altar of the graces, and whoever sacrifices to them becomingly, is sure that his offerings will be smiled upon by a Prince, who is at once the example and patron of accomplishments' (Horace Walpole in the preface to *The Anecdotes of Painting*, 1760).

It was with such high hopes that the artistic world of London greeted the accession of George III, and although royal patronage was to fall short of Horace Walpole's expectation, his prophecy was in the main fulfilled. It is sufficient to mention the names of the principal artists of the period to show that it was indeed the golden age of English painting and sculpture – Reynolds, Gainsborough, Wilson, Stubbs and Romney were all at the height of their powers, as were also the water-colourists J. R. Cozens and Thomas Girtin, and the sculptors Wilton, Banks and Nollekens. The first few years of the period were illuminated by the sunset of Hogarth, Thomas Hudson, Allan Ramsay and the trio of anglicized sculptors, Roubiliac, Rysbrack and Scheemakers. The first few years of the nineteenth century saw the rise of Lawrence, Raeburn, Constable, Blake, Turner and Flaxman, who had already begun to make their personalities felt. Indeed, it would not be too much to say that all but a handful of the greatest English artists worked during the long reign of George III.

For the history of English painting, no less than for the painters themselves, the most important event in the period was the foundation of the Royal Academy. Such an institution for the establishment of the 'rules' of high art is, of course, a necessary adjunct of any classical period; but the forces which brought about the foundation of the Academy in England were perhaps social as much as artistic, and it reflects the decline of aristocratic patronage and the rise of a much more diffuse and less homogeneous class of patrons. It is unnecessary to repeat here the tedious history of the jealousies and squabbles which marked the earliest years of the Royal Academy. '*Tantaene animis caelestibus irae?*' Suffice it to say that a group of artists who had exhibited works at the Foundling Hospital held a larger exhibition in the rooms of the Society for the Encouragement of the Arts in 1760. This exhibition was a resounding success and gave rise to three rival bodies: the Free Society of Artists of Great Britain which petered out in 1779, the Society of Artists which was incorporated by Royal charter in 1765 and lasted until 1791, and the Royal Academy itself which was founded in 1768 under the presidency of Reynolds. All three institutions held annual exhibitions but gradually the leading exhibitors deserted from the other societies to the Royal Academy where all the most important painters save Romney were to exhibit at some time. The Royal Academy was largely responsible for raising the status of artists above that of mere tradesmen or craftsmen; its banquets were attended by members of the Royal Family, by diplomatists and politicians – a far cry from the jovial carousings

of the old artists' clubs. Its schools gave students a good academic grounding with the opportunity to draw from the nude or from a collection of casts such as had previously been available for study only to those with the *entrée* to houses of great collectors. But, above all, its annual exhibitions gave artists the opportunity of studying each others' works and provided them with a shop window in which to show their performances, thus helping to free them from the old system of patronage and the tyranny of the picture dealer. Whereas the majority of pictures had formerly been painted to fulfil commissions, the Academy, and the other societies, opened up a much wider market enabling artists to exhibit history pictures, fancy scenes or landscapes on the chance of finding a purchaser or attracting sufficient interest to justify the publication of engravings.

Much as the artists complained of lack of patronage, especially for large history pictures, the sheer quantity of paintings, particularly portraits and cabinet pieces, produced during this period, is witness to the demand from new and more modest patrons who sought pictures to complete the furnishing of a small town or country house. So widespread became this demand for 'art' that an unprecedented quantity of engravings were produced to satisfy the voracious appetites of those unable to afford the price of an original painting. Engravings had always been bought by collectors, indeed, as Strutt remarked, 'almost every man of taste is in some degree a collector of prints', but their importance in the history of English painting has never been justly appreciated. They served as advertisements for the painter, spreading his fame far beyond the country house to the trim villa of the provincial lawyer or prosperous tradesman. Mezzotints, stipple and line engravings of the famous beauties of the day, of notable politicians, of scenes from recent history or of fancy pictures found their way into all but the humblest of homes. Their vogue made the painting of modern histories a profitable business and Benjamin West is said to have made as much as £15,000 out of Woollett's engravings of his *Death of Wolfe*. Indeed, artists such as M. W. Peters and Francis Wheatley must frequently have worked with one eye on the burin very much as novelists of today write with one eye on Hollywood. In this way engravings made it possible for painters to cater for a wider public than that represented by the purchasers of original pictures.

Taste and patronage

Nevertheless, the most eminent painters of the day were working for a clearly defined and limited market and their paintings reflect the taste of their wealthy patrons to the same extent as the great houses that were springing up throughout the country and the furniture that was produced for them. The size of rooms still made large pictures fashionable and whole length portraits, always favoured in England, were turned out in great quantity. But the chaster style of interior decoration introduced by the Adam brothers limited the art of the purely decorative painter to the small roundels of the ceiling, occasional panels in the wall and, more rarely, views of imaginary architecture, supplied by Biagio Rebecca, Angelica Kauffman and her prolific husband Antonio Zucchi. The titanic gods whose athletic amours had decorated many a wall and ceiling in the earlier part of the century gave place to simpering personifications and pretty prospects of ruins. The Adams were also responsible for the conception of a room as a whole with every part in concert from the ceiling to the carpet and from the chimney-piece to the door knob, and pictures must needs fit into this all-embracing scheme. Great portraits by Reynolds and Gainsborough were designed for the grand salon, fancy pieces for the boudoir, history pictures for the gallery; and it is pertinent to note that when these works are removed from their setting the pictures, no less than the rooms, lose much of their beauty and significance. Similarly, Reynolds' portraits of his literary friends, and Gainsborough's of his musical cronies, were intended for the more modest apartments of the town, and the provincial artist's style was adapted to the requirements of the minor country house, reflecting its greater solidity and less elegant refinement. The period is marked by the existence of a number of good provincial artists who, like Joseph Wright

of Derby, worked mainly for the patronage of their district.

Although, as we have already observed, patronage was by no means confined to members of the upper class, their influence remained predominant none the less. This was the great age of the Grand Tour when every young man of good family was expected to have spent some months in Italy where, under the supervision of some bear-leader or guided by a seldom altruistic cicerone, he made a nodding acquaintance with the arts which stood him in good stead for conversation on his return. His more lowly contemporaries were inclined to ape his pronouncements until, as reported by an anonymous writer of 1775, 'even the lowest people tell familiarly of Hannibal Scratchi, Paul Varnish and Raphael Angelo'. Painters consequently emulated the styles of the most popular Italians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in both portraits and history pieces, though they seldom impressed the newly returned *macaroni* who, like Sterne's critic, would remark of them that they contained 'nothing of the colouring of *Titian*, the expression of *Rubens*, the grace of *Raphael*, the purity of *Dominichino*, the *corregiescity* of *Corregio*, the learning of *Poussin*, the airs of *Guido*, the taste of the *Carrachis* or the grand contour of *Angelo*'. It was at such moments that Sir Joshua 'shifted his trumpet and only took snuff'; though no one was a more enthusiastic admirer of these artists, and the standard of taste in old masters is nowhere better expressed than in the *Discourses* he delivered each year to the students of the Royal Academy. The Italianized taste of the aristocracy, which was also, of course, the official policy of the Royal Academy throughout this period, is displayed to perfection in Zoffany's *Tribune of the Uffizi* (Pl. 21A) in to which he has crammed all those objects and paintings which the patron coveted and the artist emulated.

As the tourist admired only the classical sculptures and old master paintings in Italy, so did the painter. Contemporary foreign artists were generally considered of little account save for Pompeo Batoni, the most elegant and expensive portrait painter in Europe; Canaletto, who had nearly disgraced himself in the eyes of Taste by stepping on English soil; Zuccarelli, who came to England in this period but appears to have retained his Italian integrity, and A. R. Mengs who was more popular for his portraits than his history pictures. Batoni's influence may be discerned in the work of Ramsay, Nathaniel Dance and even to a slight degree in Reynolds himself, but the others made little impression on English painting in this period. The neo-classic style, which may owe as much to the Scottish Gavin Hamilton as to Mengs, found comparatively little favour in these isles. Hamilton did contrive to insinuate some of his vast canvasses into otherwise immaculate British houses but he had to make their purchase a condition of sale for classical sculptures and old masters. In sculpture, however, neo-classicism enjoyed uninhibited popularity because it emulated the style of the most admired statuary of the past, directly reflecting the taste of the collector.

Partly by his own inclination, and partly to cater for the taste of his patron, the English artist seeking the best market for his works modelled himself on the masters of the cinquecento and the seicento. He might also turn to seventeenth century Dutch painting which was ranked second only to Italian, and it seems likely that Gainsborough, Stubbs and, towards the end of his career, Reynolds, imbibed some inspiration from this quarter. As the reign of George III progressed, however, members of the untravelled middle classes began to grow in importance as patrons, desiring less of the grand manner but greater sentiment and truth to nature as they saw it; consequently small *genre* pieces and English landscapes became more popular. Whereas the great patron would demand grandiose portraits and, on rare occasions, such history pieces as might be mistaken for old masters in a bad light, the less wealthy wanted more intimate works; and, of course, the sporting pictures which were the particular joy of the squirearchy.

The price of pictures

In order to give some idea of the markets for which painters catered, and before proceeding to a more general account of the trends of taste in the period, a word should be said of the prices

charged. When Romney was travelling round the north of England as an itinerant face painter, between 1757 and 1762, he is said to have received two guineas for a head and six for a whole length. At the same time Reynolds was charging 25 guineas for a head and 100 for a whole length and had doubled these prices by 1779 when he was the best paid portrait painter in England. Gainsborough's prices were slightly below those of Reynolds and in 1786 he was charging 40 guineas for a head and 160 for a whole length. Once he was established Romney charged 15 guineas for a head and 60 for a whole length and had doubled these prices by 1793, when Beechey was asking the same and the young Lawrence could already obtain as much as Gainsborough at the height of his power. The prices asked for subject pictures were more variable; Reynolds obtained 50 guineas each for the little *Shepherd Boy* and the *Strawberry Girl*, but got £200 for *The Death of Dido*, 700 guineas for a replica of *Mrs Siddons as the Tragic Muse* (Pl. 21C) and 1,500 guineas for *The Infant Hercules* which was sold to Catherine the Great – he bought Gainsborough's *Girl with Pigs* (Pl. 28B) in 1782 for 100 guineas. In 1770 West was charging £300 for a history painting 'not too large to hang over a chimney' and some twenty years later Opie received 100 guineas for his *Ruth*. These are not small figures and are some indication of the prosperity enjoyed by the most popular artists, though not all – towards the end of his life Wilson considered himself lucky if he could obtain 15 guineas for a landscape. By way of comparison, it is worth recording a few of the prices paid for old masters. At Sir Luke Schaub's sale in 1758 a Claude fetched £105 and a Raphael £703; forty years later at the sale of the Orleans collection the top price of 4,000 guineas was paid for Annibale Caracci's *Descent from the Cross*, 3,500 for the *Raising of Lazarus* by Sebastino del Piombo and 3,000 for a *Virgin* by Raphael.

Literary influences

It is not necessary to indulge in elaborate comparisons between the oratory of Burke and the grand portraits of Reynolds, or between Gibbons's attitude to history and the paintings of Copley, to see how the main tendencies in literature were paralleled in the painting of the period. White's *Natural History of Selborne* and Gray's diaries have in their scientific observation of nature an obvious parallel in the animal paintings of Stubbs. The spirit of nationalism, which was an important force in the Gothic Revival, was characterized by an increased interest in the earlier English writers and a growing preference for the native landscape adorned by gothic rather than classical ruins – tastes which are clearly expressed in the history pictures and the landscapes of the day. The popularity of Macpherson's *Ossian* was mainly based on the pleasing supposition that he supplied the want of a British Homer, and he was commemorated in painting and sculpture. Ossian's appeal was also due to a curiously remote cult of the simple life, the ideal, the unspoilt barbarian, the noble savage indeed, who was depicted in his own exotic surroundings by William Hodges and was personified in Omai whom Sir Joshua Reynolds painted on more than one occasion.

Above all, the cult of Sensibility pervaded a period in which Richardson's novels were read with tearful affection – not to mention Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* (1765), Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield* (1766) and, most lachrymose of all, Henry Mackenzie's *Man of Feeling* (1771). Novelists and poets indulged a pleasing melancholy strain and invited the tear over descriptions of descents from greatness to misery, ruins (real or artificial), wild landscapes, children and the short and simple annals of the rustic poor. In an age when weeping was a mark of refinement and a young woman might die from excessive sensibility, it is hardly surprising that the dewy-eyed Magdalene of Guido Reni should have been among the most popular of pictures. The influence of sensibility on art is to be discerned in many a rugged, gloomy or mellifluously sweet landscape, in views of towering ivy-clad ruins, the resort of moping owls, and in scenes from recent history – the death of Wolfe (Pl. 30B) in the hour of triumph or of Chatham 'heart sick for his country's shame' – or in *genre* pictures of rustic groups which 'only nature could have supplied and taste and sensi-

bility selected' (to quote the words of Martin Archer Shee on Gainsborough's *Girl with Pigs*). Even in a picture of a scientific experiment – *The Bird in the Air Pump* – Joseph Wright of Derby introduced figures of children to shed innocent tears. With the notable exception of Stubbs, no successful painters in this period failed to succumb at some time to a literary taste which they no doubt enjoyed as much as their patrons.

The trends of taste apparent in the paintings of the half century under consideration can receive only the most cursory treatment in a brief survey. It is a subject much complicated by the fact that most painters indulged in the expression of more than one artistic fashion and tried their hands at nearly every *genre*. Reynolds and Gainsborough painted both grand and informal portraits, landscapes and fancy pictures; Romney hankered after history painting and Barry, all too rarely, painted portraits. In an article which is devoted to the place of English paintings in the home rather than to criticism or biographies of artists, it seems most convenient to treat the subject by *genres* – portraits, fancy pictures, landscapes, animal paintings and histories.

Portraiture

Portraiture retained its popularity throughout this period, and although artists were prone to complain of its drudgery few were so high-minded as to despise its rewards. Considered as essential for the decoration of a great house by the aristocracy, and as the first emblems of gentility by the bourgeoisie, portraits might be found in practically every house that contained pictures; and the artists, from Reynolds in London to the now forgotten journeymen in the provinces, worked hard to satisfy an ever-increasing demand. As early as 1759 Reynolds is known to have had some 150 sitters, and Gainsborough painted more than 700 portraits in the course of his career. Much as Reynolds hankered after history, as Gainsborough longed to escape to some remote village where he could settle down to landscape, or as Romney wished to realize the grandiose projects he sketched, all three were most admired and are best remembered as portrait painters.

In 1760 Reynolds was well established in London where his only rival was Allan Ramsay who had recently returned from Rome with a brand-new style based on the French pastellists and Pompeo Batoni. But although Ramsay painted some of his best portraits during the first nine years of this period, most of his time was consumed by uncongenial, though no doubt remunerative, royal commissions, and in 1769 he retired altogether from the scene. The year 1760 is of singular importance in Reynolds' career, for with the portrait of *The Duchess of Hamilton as Venus* he marked his change from the intimate to the grand manner. In the fond hope of deflecting the taste of his patrons from portraiture to 'history' he dressed his female sitters in classical garments, placed them in the attitudes of Michelangelo or Albano and sought to draw the general out of the particular. In his use of 'timeless' costume he attracted few followers, though Francis Cotes once surpassed himself and nearly equalled Sir Joshua in this manner (Pl. 24B). After 1765, when Reynolds exhibited the most remorselessly classical of all his portraits – *Lady Bunbury Sacrificing to the Graces* – he seems to have realized that the British public would not be dictated to in such a fashion and he resorted to a less artificial but no less magniloquent style. But he never condescended to the ephemeral dictates of the *modiste* and he was consequently able to portray the fashionable hostess of the moment, like Lady Hertford (Pl. 24A), *en grande tenue* as a beauty of all time. In portraits of men he resorted to fewer devices for his sharp psychological penetration enabled him to paint into them such strength of character as would transcend the bounds of time (Pl. 23). The friend of *literati* rather than painters, he was ideally suited to depict the great men of his age, and he painted them with such force that we can now see them only through his eyes. But Reynolds could descend from his dais, dropping the grand manner and his tone of high seriousness when occasion offered: he could even laugh at his high-flown pretensions, as witness the charming parody of his own grand manner in the portrait of *Master Crewe as Henry VIII* or *Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy*. His range was

indeed enormous, much wider than has sometimes been supposed. He was very much more than the 'official' portrait painter of his age, and his success in his own day, no less than his enduring fascination, resided in his variety – 'Damn him,' said Gainsborough, 'how various he is.' He could adapt his style and composition to depict with equal felicity the robust and vigorous admiral or the elegant and diaphonous *belle*, tender and melting motherhood or hard and glittering urbanity.

In 1774 Thomas Gainsborough moved from Bath to London where he could more effectively challenge Reynolds' position as the leading portrait painter of the day. Never before or since has English society been served by two artists so great and so complementary. Whereas Reynolds was a painter of intellect, Gainsborough was of feeling; Reynolds the master of substance and pose, Gainsborough of fleeting effects of light. Gainsborough's more exquisite, more feminine talent, his delicious creamy paint, his fine draughtsmanship and his transformation scene effects will never lack admirers, especially among those who find it difficult to appreciate Reynolds' subtlety. Moreover, Gainsborough could be no less effective than Reynolds in the grand manner as is evinced by the magnificent state portrait of the Duke of Argyll (Pl. 22) in which he has firmly grasped the forceful character of his sitter, presenting an image or great power and solidity which is in no way weakened by his delight in the beauty and variety of the textures of his robes, painted, as always, with the utmost virtuosity, in a shimmering pattern of brilliant flicks and blobs of paint. The strength, weight and solidity of this portrait (dating from 1767) was not often to be recaptured for Gainsborough gradually succumbed to the fascination of textures and surface effects so that his figures became increasingly wraith-like and insubstantial. Enamoured as he was of silk and satins, Gainsborough rarely forewent the pleasure of painting his sitters' costumes himself; his canvasses are therefore seldom marred by the mechanical touch of the 'drapery painter' or studio assistant, and every part of his best portraits is from his own hand and of equal artistic merit.

Those who desired neither the elevation of Reynolds nor the shimmering evanescence of Gainsborough might, after 1773, employ George Romney, who was born to be the fashionable portrait painter *par excellence*. He could always be relied upon to produce a good likeness, and sometimes displayed a keen insight into character as in his capital portraits of the young Etonian, Lord Grey (Pl. 25), the disillusioned ageing statesman, Warren Hastings, or the elegant young couple setting out to inspect their estate (Pl. 63D). Eminently professional, his work generally smells too much of the studio, and even when painting his *femme fatale*, Emma Hart (later Lady Hamilton) he appears thin-blooded and coldly calculating. Despite his charm and accomplishment, it is difficult for us now to understand how the London of 1783 could be of two factions, Reynolds' and Romney's.

Towards the end of his career Romney was rivalled by John Hoppner and William Beechey, both of whom catered for more humdrum sitters and produced portraits which appeal to us now mainly as period pieces. They had a sharp eye for fashion in dress and *toilette* which endowed their female sitters with a certain charm, though they occasionally made them look as if they might at any moment fall prey to excessive sensibility. A more lively note was struck by the arch-realist J. S. Copley, who painted the sparkling rococo group of *The Three Princesses* (Pl. 24C).

Before leaving the subject of portraiture a word should be said of the pastellists who enjoyed a considerable vogue until the 'nineties, when the most notable, John Russell, who had in his heyday commanded prices as high as Reynolds, was forced to tour the provinces in search of sitters. He executed a vast number of portraits, some of which show a refined sensitivity and all of which are characterized by an admirable respect for his medium. Francis Cotes, William Hoare, Ozias Humphrey and Daniel Gardner were also prominent portraitists in pastel.

John Zoffany

The taste for conversation piece portraits, which was well established before the period began, was given new impetus by the arrival in

England of John Zoffany. With his almost photographic technique which enabled him to reproduce the minutiae of fashionable clothes and interior decoration as if seen through a quiz-glass, he won immediate popularity and went to Florence to paint the *Tribune of the Uffizi* (Pl. 21A). This picture delights us now as an amusing and authoritative epitome of the current taste in pictures no less than as an illustration of the Grand Tour, while his equally delightful painting of Charles Townley among his 'marbles' affords an intimate view of the *virtuoso* at home. Other artists who worked in this *genre* included Francis Wheatley and Arthur Devis.

Fancy pictures

Sir Joshua Reynolds found it hard to determine whether Gainsborough had 'most excelled in portraits, landscapes or Fancy pictures' but confessed himself to have been captivated by 'the interesting simplicity and elegance of his ordinary little beggar children'. The first of Gainsborough's fancy pictures to be exhibited appeared in the Academy of 1781 and, although it does not seem to have won the approval of the *cognoscenti*, it made a great impression on the artists. Reynolds later bought his *Girl with Pigs* (Pl. 28B) and essayed the same style in his *Strawberry Girl* and *Shepherd Boy*. Within a few years the exhibitions were abundantly supplied with little scenes of rustic innocence which made an immediate appeal to the urban middle classes. Of the many artists who worked in this *genre*, Francis Wheatley was probably the most successful but none was more ruthless than George Morland (Pl. 28C) in his exploitation of the nostalgia for a rural society that was already vanishing, for a poverty more picturesque, if no less miserable, than that of the town. The *genre* scenes of John Opie, the Cornish Wonder (Pl. 29B), are less densely clouded by the romantic attitude to rustic life, the harsh reality of which he had experienced in person.

Closely connected with fancy pictures, illustrations of scenes from contemporary literature also enjoyed a wide popularity. The most interesting artist in this vein was Joseph Wright of Derby, who extracted incidents from Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*, and from the poems of Hayley, Langhorne and Beattie, whose Edwin would sometimes emit 'a sigh, a tear so sweet, he wish'd not to controul'. Although Wright lived solely in Derby, he exhibited regularly in London and never appears to have lacked patronage for his pictures, or a market for prints after them. The source for one of his more remarkable works, *Miravan Opening the Tomb of his Ancestors* (Pl. 28A) has never been identified but it takes place in the vault of some neo-classical castle – of Otranto or Udolpho – and is a curious mixture of all the fashionable tendencies of the time. John Hamilton Mortimer also painted pictures of a literary character, but specialized in *banditti* which were thought to challenge comparison with Salvator Rosa. A less gloomy figure, the Rev. Mathew William Peters, painted little pictures of a faintly *risqué* nature, illustrated such passages from Shakespeare as could include simpering femininity; and finally, after he had taken orders, turned to religious paintings in the style of Mengs. He too was widely popularized by stipple engravings and mezzotints.

Landscape

Like fancy pictures, landscapes owed their patronage mainly to the rising middle class who seem to have appreciated them for their content rather than for their truth to nature. Consequently Gainsborough found that he could make his landscapes saleable only by the introduction of figures – on one occasion he copied his pig girl group into the middle distance. His landscapes of this period are characterized by a sweet lyricism, a feeling for gently undulating country and an appearance of naturalism, though many were painted from little arrangements of moss and pebbles in his studio. They are, in fact, subtle evocations of the English scene rather than accurate delineations of it, and it would frequently be hard to identify his trees, let alone his grasses. Nor was Richard Wilson a greater respecter of topography except when engaged in painting the 'portrait' of a country house in the Claudean setting of its landscaped park. Too much an artist to resort to a purely topographical technique

and too stoical to indulge the tear of sensibility, he fell between the two stools of the accepted landscape tradition. It is significant that his most successful picture showed Niobe in a wild setting of rocks, and that it brought in £2,000 for Woollett the engraver. His views of the English or Welsh scene (Pl. 26A) are carefully composed, flooded with Italian light and exquisitely restrained; but they were hardly calculated to appeal to the man of feeling who wished to indulge sweet melancholy over a ruin or be chilled into a pleasing horror by a mountain. Wilson was too classical, and thus out of tune with his age which allowed him to die in poverty. It is remarkable and, indeed, unaccountable that his works should have been sought after within a decade of his death, since when his reputation has steadily increased until it reached its present height (a Wilson now fetches more in the London art market than a capital piece by his master Claude).

George Barrett, a man of sound common sense with an eye for the picturesque possibilities of a real scene, produced just what his patrons wanted, and succeeded as a prose Wilson. Artists like Michelangelo Rooker were able to extract the most from a crumbling ivy-clad ruin, and Thomas Patch could do the same for such an Italian scene as *The Falls of Terni.* The Smith brothers of Chichester adapted the Dutch style to the English landscape and achieved a considerable success, both through their paintings and the prints after them. Towards the end of our period Julius Caesar Ibbetson showed himself an adept of the sweet pastoral scene or the wild romantic landscape, the ideals of which are clearly expressed in his picture of a *Phaeton in a Thunderstorm* (Pl. 29A) in which he has made use of every device to accentuate the melodrama – lowering clouds, beetling crags, savage country and a modish vehicle involved in a horrifying incident.

Watercolour

No outline of landscape painting in the late eighteenth century would be complete without some mention of those in watercolour, a medium particularly well suited to the delicate tonality of the English countryside. Watercolours enjoyed popularity first as topographical records and then as independent works of art. One of the leading practitioners of the medium, Paul Sandby, was employed by the equivalent of the Ordnance Survey Department. Francis Towne, who is a discovery of recent years, was known in his own time, if he was known at all, as a meticulous and uninspired painter of country house prospects in oils, but his delicate watercolours or tinted drawings, in which mountain scenes were reduced to a series of plane surfaces (Pl. 27B) were representative of a trend in the attitude to landscape. His purely linear method is in contrast to the style of John Robert Cozens whose romantic approach, emphasized by smoky washes which endowed his works with a depth and mystery (Pl. 27A), made an appeal to such men of taste as William Beckford. In 1794 Cozens went out of his mind and was cared for by Dr Thomas Monro, an able amateur draughtsman, the friend of Gainsborough and the patron of Thomas Girtin, J. M. W. Turner and John Varley. Until his early death in 1802, Girtin may well have appeared the most promising of these young artists and his brilliant use of glowing transparent colours prepares us for the mature work of Turner in the nineteenth century, though his attitude to landscape was entirely of his age (Pl. 27C). John Varley occasionally came near him in his large views of Wales but clung more closely to the topographical tradition.

Animal painting

In the earlier part of the eighteenth century it is hard to separate landscape from sporting painting, for until his death in 1756 John Wootton had been pre-eminent in both *genres.* His successor, George Stubbs, was primarily a painter of animals, and as such he was considered beyond the pale of the Royal Academy until 1780, when he had distinguished himself by exhibiting history pictures and portrait groups. But although he was neglected by the grand theorists, he seems to have attracted a wide and, no doubt, profitable patronage. By scientific investigation he came to a full understanding of the anatomy not only of the horse but of man, all domestic and some wild

A

B

C

(A) JOHANN ZOFFANY's 'Tribune of the Uffizi (1772–6) (*reproduced by gracious permission of H.M. the Queen*), sums up the sophisticated taste of the age which found expression in such works as: (B) JOSEPH NOLLEKENS' 'Castor and Pollux' (1767) (*Victoria and Albert Museum*), which is based on a Roman group, and (C) SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS' 'Mrs Siddons as the Tragic Muse' (1784) (*The Governors of Dulwich College*), which is derived from a Sibyl by Michelangelo.

PLATE 21

facing page 60

THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH. 'John, 4th Duke of Argyll' (1767).
The National Galleries of Scotland.

PLATE 22

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS. 'Lord Heathfield' (1788).
The National Gallery.

PLATE 23

A

B

C

The taste for the Noble and Grand as displayed in two portraits: (A) SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS' 'The Marchioness of Hertford' (1781) (*Temple Newsam House, Leeds*) and (B) FRANCIS COTES' 'Lady Stanhope and Lady Effingham as Diana and an Attendant' (*c.* 1765–70) (*The Earl of Mexborough*). A livelier note is struck by (C) J. S. COPLEY'S 'The Three Princesses' (1785) (*reproduced by gracious permission of H.M. The Queen*).

PLATE 24

GEORGE ROMNEY. 'Charles Grey, afterwards 2nd Earl Grey' (1784).
The Provost and Fellows of Eton College.

PLATE 25

(A) RICHARD WILSON. 'Pembroke Town and Castle' (1774)
The National Museum of Wales.

(B) GEORGE STUBBS. 'Landscape with a Gentleman holding his Horse' (*c.* 1770).
The Tate Gallery.

PLATE 26

A

B

C

Water colour landscapes: (A) J. R. Cozens. 'Ariccia' (*c.* 1790), (B) Francis Towne. 'The Vale of St John' (1786), and (C) Thomas Girtin. 'Ripon Minster' (1800). *Leeds City Art Gallery.*

PLATE 27

A

B

The literary vogue for *sensibility* as expressed in (A) JOSEPH WRIGHT's 'Miravan opening the Tombs of his Ancestors' (1772) (*Derby City Art Gallery*); (B) THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH's 'The Girl with Pigs' (1782) (*Major George Howard*) (C) GEORGE MORLAND's 'Farmer Buying Sheep' (1794) (*Leicester City Art Gallery*).

C

(A) JULIUS CAESAR IBBETSON. 'A Phaeton in a Thunderstorm' (1798).
Leeds City Art Gallery.

(B) JOHN OPIE. 'A Peasant Family' (1783–5).
The Tate Gallery.

(A) JAMES BARRY. 'The Foundation of the Royal Society of Arts' (1777–83). *Royal Society of Arts.*

(B) The engraving by WILLIAM WOOLLETT (1776) of 'The Death of Wolfe', painted in 1771 by Benjamin West. *Picture Post Library.*

A

B

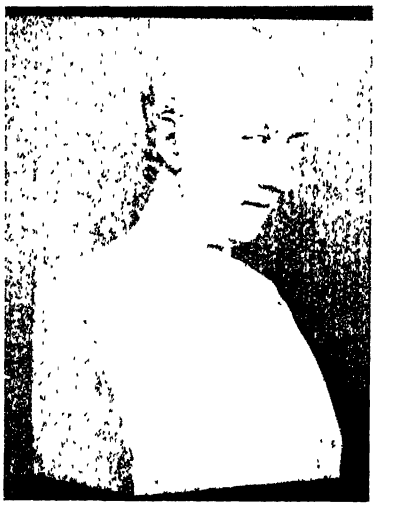
The contrast between the naturalistic and the neo-classical treatment of 'history' is shown by (A) J. S. COPLEY's 'Death of Major Pierson' (1783) (*The National Gallery*), and (B) JOHN DEARE's marble relief, 'Edward and Eleanor' (1788).

A

(A) THOMAS BANKS. 'The Falling Titan' (1786), *The President and the Council of the Royal Academy.* (B) JOHN BACON. 'George III' (1775), *reproduced by gracious permission of H.M. the Queen.* (C) JOSEPH NOLLEKENS. 'Laurence Sterne' (1766), *The National Portrait Gallery.* (D) CHRISTOPHER HEWETSON. 'Gavin Hamilton' (1784), *by permission of the University of Glasgow.*

B

C



D

PLATE 32

animals; his curiosity also led him to study flora and enabled him to paint trees and grasses with accuracy. But his painting was characterized by something more than truth to nature, as may be seen from the subtle pattern of curves he derived from a horse, a man and a dog (Pl. 26B). Moreover, one feels that he painted men and beasts to emphasize the greater magnificence and beauty of the animal. In the history of English art he is an isolated figure, for he founded no school of animal painting and his influence is most notable in the work of Constable and the French romantics.

The nineteenth-century school of sporting and animal painting derives from Sawrey Gilpin, a younger and less able painter than Stubbs, who was also forced to exhibit histories in order to win the recognition of the Academicians. Lacking Stubbs' anatomical knowledge and feeling for supple line, he had a great liveliness and was the formative influence on Ben Marshall and James Ward, whose work was begun before the end of this period but belongs stylistically to the next. Gilpin stands above the general run of sporting painters of the time, notably the Sartorius tribe, whose paintings of Derby and St Leger winners, reproduced in countless prints, graced the walls of the horsier country houses.

History painting

Mention of the history paintings of Stubbs and Gilpin bring us to the form of art which, at some time, seems to have excited the ambition of nearly every artist of importance in this period. The belief that History was a higher form of art than portraiture or landscape had been established earlier in the century, and Reynolds gave it further encouragement in his *Discourses*, though his own eclectic, not to say plagiaristic, works in this vein had little but prestige value. Without the patronage of great institutions or a church (religious paintings are relatively few though more numerous than is commonly supposed) for which they might work on the grand scale, painters set up a wail that the 'highest' art languished unappreciated. In fact, most of the histories hung at the Academy appear to have been sold; the more important were widely diffused by engravings and Benjamin West seems to have made a fortune out of painting them.

When West arrived in England in 1763 he settled down to paint portraits and 'Poussin size' histories, winning an almost immediate success which brought him to royal notice and patronage. These works were little more than exercises after Gavin Hamilton, whom he had met in Rome; but he created a furore in 1771, when it was still customary to represent the heroic in classical dress, by painting the *Death of Wolfe* (Pl. 30B) in modern costumes, though in no whit relaxing his previous grand manner. The great popular success of this picture marked a turning point in history painting; from thenceforth classical subjects gave way to events from English history represented in the costume of their time. However, except for his abandonment of classical costume, West clung steadfastly to the established rules of the *genre* – notably by his formal composition, his reliance on poses derived from the Old Masters and his utter disregard for the known facts of the historical scene depicted. The next, and more important, step in the development of history painting was taken by J. S. Copley whose *Brooke Watson and the Shark* of 1778 broke every known rule in the cause of Truth. Copley followed up the success of this picture by painting the *Death of Major Pierson* (Pl. 31A), the *Death of Chatham* and the *Repulse of the Floating Batteries off Gibraltar*; all of which drew crowds when they were exhibited and enjoyed popularity as engravings.

Whereas West and Copley made a financial success of history painting, James Barry was less ready to conform to the desires of the time and was consequently a failure. His *chef d'œuvre*, the decoration of the lecture hall in the Royal Society of Arts is, however, the most considerable achievement of any British artist in the grand style in the century, and the scene which represents the culmination of the *Progress of Culture* (Pl. 30A) – the foundation of the Society – contains so great a concourse of the notabilities of the day that it may find a place even in a book devoted to the art of the English home. He is now remembered chiefly because of his influence on William Blake

who considered him the rival of Raphael and Michelangelo, in which judgment he would have concurred. Another history painter to influence Blake was the Swiss Fuseli, whose wildly romantic talent derived subjects from Shakespeare. As Professor of painting at the Royal Academy from 1799 to 1825, he exerted a strong influence on the young painters whose work will be considered in the next volume of this series. But Fuseli is here important as an illustrator of Shakespeare and was widely known by engravings after the vast canvases which he, together with several other artists, contributed to Alderman Boydell's ambitious scheme for a Shakespeare Gallery.

Rowlandson and Gillray

Prints after the most admired history pictures of the time must frequently have found their way into comparatively humble homes where they might be seen among their natural antitheses, the caricatures of Rowlandson, Gillray, the amateur Bunbury and a host of others. Thomas Rowlandson's rollicking rumbustious productions, which call to mind scenes from Smollett, are an effective antidote to any impression of overmastering sensibility in the conduct of life in this period. His drawing of the confused rabble visiting the Academy must be before any writer who deals with the high or the exquisite turns of eighteenth century taste. He was, however, a perceptive satirist by no means without delicacy of feeling and touch, as is shown by his watercolour landscapes. Less able as an artist, but more virulent as a satirist, James Gillray is a more important figure in the history of caricature. With the rival policies of Pitt and Fox, the French wars and the *amours* and eccentricities of the Prince Regent as targets, he had the perfect field for his abilities, and presented the political and social background of the period in its utmost squalor.

Sculpture

Although we may expect to find paintings or prints after paintings in all but the humblest homes during this period, original sculpture remained the prerogative of the wealthy; and the middle-class family who might collect pictures in a small way would seldom encounter it outside the church. The wealthier institutions and the grander houses would usually contain a few marble chimney-pieces and, perhaps, a bust, but figures, groups and low reliefs were reserved for the galleries of the wealthy. Those who could not afford this expensive taste would have to content themselves with reproductions of original works in pottery, terra-cotta or artificial stone. It was the invention of Coade stone in 1769 which placed moulded sculpture within the reach of a wide public, and this substance, which was impervious to frost, quickly found its way into the houses and gardens of all the propertied classes. The Coade factory at Lambeth, which sent its wares to such distant places as Poland, Russia, the West Indies and North America, could provide anything from an Ionic capital (13*s.*) or a frieze of griffins (10*s.* a foot) to a bust of Queen Elizabeth (3 guineas), a 'Psyche fitted up with spring tubes for light' (5 guineas) or a 'River God 9 feet high with an Urn through which a stream of water may be carried' (100 guineas). Some of these works were designed by the first artists of the day, John Bacon, Flaxman and Banks among them, and brought sculpture into the homes which could not afford the marbles with which we are here primarily concerned. The Coade factory was also responsible for many of the capitals, friezes, low reliefs and even pediments which are such a notable feature of the urban architecture of the early nineteenth century.

Large sculptured marble chimney-pieces were going out of fashion at the beginning of this period and it is significant that one of the most notable, that carved between 1762 and 1764 at a cost of £325 for the gallery of Corsham Court, was by Scheemakers, an artist most of whose career belongs to the first half of the century. A more delicate style of interior decoration introduced by the Adam brothers demanded less pompous ornaments, and the groaning caryatids were replaced by trim frames lightly carved in low relief or prettily inlaid with scagliola. Although they were sometimes supplied by the leading practitioners,

Fig. 1. Nollekens carving a Venus, by Thomas Rowlandson.
British Museum.

such works can hardly be described as sculpture. Above the fireplace or elsewhere in the room a decorative feature was occasionally made of a low relief such as that carved by John Deare in 1788 (Pl. 31B).

Deare's relief stands mid-way between the decorative and what may be called history sculpture, reflecting the more absurd neo-classical tendencies of the period. It may be doubted, however, whether his contemporaries would have shared our delighted surprise on learning that these elegant Greeks were none other than our own King Edward I and Queen Eleanor. This exquisite relief is proof, if proof were needed, that neo-classicism was a stronger and more durable force in sculpture than in English painting.

Long before this period began sculptors were commissioned to copy the celebrated antique statues in Florence and Rome, and when they were asked to produce more original works they were expected to carve such figures as could barely be distinguished from the fragments ingeniously put together by the Roman dealers. The restriction was a hard one for an original genius, but a sculptor of ability, like Nollekens, could often obtain a good effect as in the group of *Castor and Pollux* (Pl. 21B) which he executed for Shugborough Hall in 1767. In low reliefs and small figures, moreover, Thomas Banks, the most notable history sculptor of the period, was able to draw a strong personal style out of the neo-classic mode. In his *Falling Titan* (Pl. 32A) he achieved an effect of such remarkable grandeur that anyone familiar with the photograph must be astonished to find that the marble itself measures no more than 33 inches in height. In *Thetis Dipping the Infant Achilles in the Styx* he was able to show a three-dimensional quality, rare indeed in English sculpture, and the flowing lines of the figure seek to leap out of the classical pattern, restrained only by the careful balance of the limbs.

Among men of taste the popularity of busts increased considerably during this period, no less for the depiction of the living than for the commemoration of the great dead. No 'gentleman's library' was complete without its poets and philosophers, the *natural genii* of the place. Busts of Pope, Milton, Locke and Newton were produced throughout the period, nor were Homer and Plato forgotten. Wilton carved a bust of Alfred the Great for Lord Radnor (who presented it to University College, Oxford); Bacon began his career with a bust of Ossian and later carved those of Dean Collet for St Paul's School and Inigo Jones for the Carpenters' Hall. Busts of the contemporary great were frequently repeated by their carvers, and Nollekens sold 74 replicas of his bust of Pitt at £120 a piece. Furthermore, busts were often incorporated in church monuments, as every reader of Gray's *Elegy* knows.

Most of the notable sculptors of the period seem to have tried their hands at portraiture, one of the most successful being John Bacon who, according to Cowper,

> Gives more than female heart to stone
> And Chatham's eloquence to marble lips.

But, as in the bust of George III (Pl. 32B), it was a precise imitation of draperies rather than animation of features which distinguished his work. In contrast, Joseph Nollekens, unquestionably the best portrait sculptor of the period, dispensed with or formalized the drapery, did away with the wig where possible and was consequently able to work unhampered in the neo-classic spirit. In portraits of ladies – the most notable is that of the Countess of Yarborough – he managed to perpetuate the beauty and freshness of his models, despite a tendency to make them so prettily sensitive that one expects them to blush at an unmannerly remark. His singularly penetrating busts of men – Laurence Sterne (Pl. 32C), Sir George Savile, Dr Johnson, Charles James Fox – are worthy to stand among all but the very best painted portraits of the period. Many other sculptors executed busts of excellent quality, like those of Pope Clement XIV and Gavin Hamilton (Pl. 32D) by Christopher Hewetson, but the majority of these have survived only in funerary monuments.

In this period church monuments grew larger and more numerous than ever before and one has the feeling that his way was indeed obscure whose memory was not graced with a tablet bearing at

least an urn. A legion of sculptors and stonemasons laboured to fill our gothic churches with an assemblage of classical figures representing not only the deceased but the Virtues, the Muses, and whoever else might be introduced to lament his death or support his tomb. Nor did sculptors find this work unprofitable – Nollekens charged £100 for the sketch of a monument and Bacon received no less than £6,000 for the memorial to Lord Chatham in Westminster Abbey. Indeed, to satisfy an enormous demand the sculptors were forced to employ an army of assistants and some of them never laid hand to chisel once their success had been established.

Monumental sculpture was at this time, dominated by neo-classicism which permitted such delightful incongruities as the figure of Admiral Holmes, in breast-plate and toga, resting his hand upon an unmistakably eighteenth-century cannon, or Sir John and Lady Salusbury who appear to have strayed out of Addison's *Cato* or some long forgotten classical tragedy. There was, nevertheless, a strain of naturalism which found its most notable expression in low reliefs of land and sea fights and flourished towards the end of the period when modern dress began to make its return. Large monuments gave sculptors the chance to include whole concourses of figures bewailing the subject, but when they worked on a smaller scale they usually had to content themselves with a limited stock of symbols: urns, extinguished torches, wreaths and, if all else failed, what John Bacon called 'our old friend the pelican'.

In the early years of the nineteenth century no sculptor was more versatile in providing monuments for a wide market than John Flaxman, whose work ranges from the gigantic Nelson memorial in St Paul's Cathedral to numerous little tablets in country churches. Although his classicism had been more thoroughly assimilated than that of any other sculptor of the time, he permitted himself to depart from the strictest rules when the occasion offered. His heroic figure of Nelson is by no means without a touch of naturalism in the head and his charming relief of Dr Warton and his scholars, in Winchester cathedral, is as fresh and vivid as it is unsentimental. Moreover, he was far better equipped to treat the nude than any previous English sculptor, as may be seen from his figure of Death on Lord Mansfield's monument in St Paul's; but his technique is more of low relief than sculpture in the round. It is significant that he is the only English sculptor to win a measure of European fame, albeit this was due more to his linear illustrations to Homer and Dante than to his carvings.

The beginning of the nineteenth century

This brief survey of late Georgian painting and sculpture comes to its close in 1810, when the future of the arts was regarded with much less hope than it had been fifty years before. For more than a decade, Europe had been closed to the student and the collector, though the needs of the latter were amply supplied (as a result of the Revolutionary wars) by a greater importation of old master paintings than ever before. Martin Archer Shee complained that the country was 'glutted with pictures from the best that genius can boast to the worst that fraud can manufacture; until all the wealth of individuals disposable for objects of virtue has been diverted into channels from which our native arts can derive no benefit'. For lack of patronage alone, he argued, English art was sinking into a decline; yet it was from no want of employment that Flaxman and Lawrence were rising to occupy the places of leading sculptor and portrait painter; and, on the other hand, it was from no spectacular acts of munificence that Constable and Turner were to become our greatest landscape painters. As the attitude to art, to nature, to life, was changed by the French revolution and the subsequent wars, so new artists rose to reflect new tastes. Sensibility gave way to subjective romanticism: the real landscape took the place of the imaginative or improved; and in painting, no less than in poetry, the visionary was making his appearance.

Although he belongs to the nineteenth century, William Blake, who styled himself a visionary, had deep roots in the previous era. The contemporary artists who most influenced him were Fuseli, Flaxman and Barry, who derived much of

their inspiration from Italy. He was one of the first to dispute the authority of Reynolds' academic precepts as laid down in the *Discourses*, but was none the less inspired to borrow postures from Scamozzi and Michelangelo. His poetry, no less than his painting, showed him to be the fieriest of spirits; and yet he illustrated Blair's *The Grave*, a poem redolent with the distant sensibility of the earlier eighteenth century. Furthermore, in his study of medieval sculpture and manuscript illumination he showed himself to be a child of the Gothic Revival. His illustration of the tomb in Blair's *The Grave* (Fig. 2) shows at once how much he was of the eighteenth century and yet how far he looked beyond it.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The essential book for the study of painting in this period is *Painting in Britain 1530–1790* by E. K. Waterhouse (1953) which is provided with an invaluable bibliography. *A Century of Painters of the English School* by R. and S. Redgrave (ed. Ruthven Todd, 1949) is useful for the last two decades of this period.

The *Dictionary of British Sculptors* by Rupert Gunnis (1953), the fullest and best account of sculpture in the period, is well supplied with bibliographies for the individual sculptors.

Fig. 2. The Counsellor, King, Warrior, Mother and Child in the Tomb, from Blair's *The Grave*, illustrated by William Blake. *British Museum.*

Silver and Plate

Silver and Plate

GERALD TAYLOR

Changes in style evolve slowly and to a great extent almost imperceptibly so that no sudden transformation in the forms of plate can be expected to coincide with the accession of George III in 1760 or with the year 1811 when the Prince of Wales became Prince Regent. It will, however, be shown that during the intervening half-century the Rococo style was outmoded by the Adam style (a discussion of the characteristics of which forms the chief part of the following contribution) and that the latter in its turn gave place to what is now known as the Regency style. The transition from Rococo to Adam, naturally later in plate than in architecture, began about 1765, and was, with few exceptions, completed before 1775. The emergence of the Regency style from that of Adam, perhaps more correctly described as an evolution, during the last quarter of the century, was accomplished by 1810. It must be understood that these generalizations apply only to the metropolitan silversmiths and do not relate to the work of provincial or American craftsmen.

As in its development the light Rococo style accumulated supplementary ornaments of naturalistic flowers (Pl. 33A), classical figures, or exotic *chinoiseries*, so the succeeding Adam style, likewise essentially light, assimilated Gothic, Chinese, Egyptian and emblematic motifs taken from nature, as well as more elaborate and massively conceived forms and ornaments selected from equally diverse and remote sources. An analogy may be made with the development, though it continued over a much longer period of time, of imperial Roman architecture from the purer styles preceding it.

The decline of so contrived and sophisticated a style as the Rococo was protracted by the adoption of foreign and quite unrelated motifs. With increasing momentum the inevitable reaction of 'taste' against the Rococo coincided with the introduction of a quite incompatible vocabulary of motifs, – neo-classical, positive, rational – which conformed with the underlying tradition of classical idealism that since the Renaissance had never been entirely submerged. The introduction of neo-classical motifs and forms into the silversmiths' repertoire can be noted in the capitals of western Europe shortly after the accession of George III and about ten years before Louis XVI came to the throne in France, where he gave his name to the new style. The designs of plate became strictly symmetrical, their proportions based on those of architecture, and their ornaments impersonal, regular, and stylized to a high degree.

The approach to and independent studies of classical remains by many intelligent and some brilliant men of the period, such as Winckelmann, Adam and Piranesi, were perhaps more informed and penetrating than those of their predecessors in the late fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries. Nevertheless even the best-informed contemporary students made some attributions of artifacts to centuries and civilizations, which might seem arbitrary to our eyes. The practical application to plate of their findings, however, at a time when a greater number of educated persons were more familiar with classical history, ideas and

imagery, than ever before or even today, met with widespread understanding and approbation. The beginnings of analytical study of classical ornament at this period had produced a clearer conception of its principles and effected a wider application of its details to the arts.

Thence it was often possible for the designers of plate to apply much authentic ornament to vessels whose proportions were based on what were then accepted as the correct classical forms. Their task required more imagination than, for example, that of architects, not only because the principal hoards of classical plate had yet to be discovered, but also because nearly all of the classical artifacts illustrated in published works had been made for ceremonies and uses no longer current, and the forms of which were not readily adaptable to the requirements of the eighteenth century. Indeed 'Adam' plate was rather inspired by, if not deduced from, the better-known remains of architecture, sculpture and vessels of bronze or pottery only.

The introduction of the Adam style, its swift ascendancy and dominance for two decades, were followed by a gradual process of development and transformation culminating in the Regency style. Predominantly Graeco-Roman, it also included Gothic, Rococo and Egyptian terms so that by the beginning of the Regency period it may be said that no coherent and distinguishable style existed for plate, but rather an eclectic combination of forms and motifs suitable for each and any particular purpose.

At this time, British plate was being exported abroad and began to influence the wares of Scandinavia and the Iberian Peninsula. Considerable quantities were also shipped to the United States of America, whose independence, acknowledged in 1782, coincided with westward expansion and whose rich resources heralded the future of a flourishing silver industry which had roots in the British elements of Boston and Philadelphia, and among the Dutch immigrant craftsmen in New York. Moreover, by the Treaty of Commerce in 1786, imports of English silverware were again permitted into France and, finally, at the Revolution the work of the Parisian goldsmith whose standard of quality hitherto had command of the world's market – in which weight of metal, excellence of workmanship and well-proportioned designs were considered of greater importance than price – gave way to the productions of London.

In widespread ways commercial and industrial progress follows the fortunes of peace and war and both have direct repercussions on the craft of the silversmith. At the time in question, moreover, there were men of strong character and inventive mind who had no small influence on the developing industry; for the manufacture of plate, as of so many other products, was indeed becoming industrialized. Instead of being hammered, sheets of metal could be rolled from the ingot; stamping and piercing operations could be quickly performed by machinery and without the aid of skilled craftsmen.

Among the more enterprising figures in the rising industry was Matthew Boulton[1] (1728–1809), whose business relations with Watt, Adam and Wedgwood kept him in the forefront of industrial pioneering in many fields almost throughout the reign. He began to produce in mass roughly-finished component parts of plate to be sold for assembly by independent workers. Engineering and metallurgical advances not only improved production machinery but led to new fields for expansion. Bronze- or copper-gilt had been common in earlier centuries, and ormolu was in wide current use; but at this date a method of fusing a copper ingot between two thick silver plates and rolling out the whole into a thin composite sandwich, enabled objects to be made of this cheaper and lighter substitute which to all intents and purposes had the appearance of solid silver. Invented in Sheffield and first applied to the making of buttons about 1743, the idea was gradually applied to larger objects and finally industrialized on a large scale by the partners Boulton and Fothergill in Birmingham. Sheffield Plate, the name by which it came to be, and is still

[1] H. W. Dickinson, *Matthew Boulton*, 1937, pp. 51–3 and *passim*.

known, was made in increasing quantities by a number of other firms until the middle of the succeeding century.[2]

The rise of the factory presented a threat to the livelihood of small workers who followed traditional methods of production. Many of them were induced to specialize in a particular type of work, especially flat ware and candlesticks, while others, unable to hold their own, became employees of large concerns. The cleavage between the plate-worker and the retailing goldsmith grew wider. The large and prosperous firm was enabled to attract and employ the more outstanding designers and craftsmen and the fact, for example, that there is reason to believe Matthew Boulton had an interest in schools for designers in Birmingham is significant.

The growing threat of the Birmingham and Sheffield factories to the established quasi-monopoly of the London goldsmiths (as well as to the older provincial centres of the craft), as represented by Boulton's activities, was more than met by the rapid rise to prominence of Paul Storr (freeman 1792; d. 1834) and by the immense size of the Rundell–Bridge–Storr–Mortimer–Hunt and Roskell concern – which is reputed to have employed 1,500 hands at one time – as well as by the considerable productions of other large firms, the Batemans, the Hennells, or the Parker–Wakelin–Taylor–Garrard succession. London was never in danger of losing its lead either in the weight of plate produced, or, more importantly, in the quality of its design and execution.

Boulton's persistent efforts for the establishment of assay offices at Birmingham and Sheffield – the latter ironically was given as its mark a *crown* which Boulton has used on his own earlier plate and Sheffield Plate – were however justified by the distances of other provincial offices, notably of York, Chester (where Boulton used to take his wares), or Newcastle from the growing centres of production. At Exeter the craft had dwindled from the middle of the century. The evidence of the assay-masters of these last four offices before a commission of 1773 shows a slackness in administration, which was as much due to lack of supervision from the Lord Chancellor's office and the Royal Mint as to the inadequacy of their own small establishments. Edinburgh remained the principal Scottish office although the importance of Glasgow increased considerably. In Dublin the craft flourished, as may be judged from the fact that 136 goldsmiths registered their names, if not all their marks, in compliance with the statute of 1783.

To satisfy the demands of the growing middle classes, goods of inferior weight and simple ornament, in silver, Sheffield plate [3] and Britannia metal [4] were produced in quantity, and throughout the reign the production of plate and with it of course, the number of plate-workers increased immensely. Nevertheless it was naturally the ruling class with its international connections which continued to order the largest quantities of the finest plate and in the newest fashion. The King himself patronized Thomas Heming (cf. Pl. 33A) but his preference for the quietness of domestic life reduced requirements for formal State plate to little or none.[5] Indeed, almost the only purchase of any consequence made by George III was of a set of French plate, by Henri Auguste. His heir, on the other hand, played a very active and even over-liberal role in setting the fashion in plate as he did in so many other aspects of fashionable life. It was a curiously prophetic circumstance that the Prince of Wales was offered the Freedom of the Goldsmiths' Company when only a boy of nine, but it was not until a separate establishment was set up for him in Carlton House, at the age of 18, in 1781, that he provided confirmation of his extravagant leanings. Perhaps the first piece of plate he acquired personally was the cup by

[2] Paul Storr's Galvanic Goblet (1814) heralded the electro-plating industry, developed especially by Messrs. Elkington. See C. C. Oman, and N. M. Penzer, *Country Life*, CXV (4 March 1954), p. 606.

[3] The most comprehensive work on the subject is F. Bradbury's *History of Old Sheffield Plate*, 1912.

[4] See G. B. Hughes, *Country Life*, CXIV (20 August 1953), p. 562.

[5] E. A. Jones, *The Gold and Silver of Windsor Castle*, 1911, *passim*. See also *Catalogue of the Exhibition of Royal Plate*, held in the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1954, and the *Small Picture Book* of the same title (No. 37), which illustrates it.

R. Salmon presented to him on his attaining his majority. Just after the turn of the century, three important royal services were ordered, the Jamaica, the Egyptian and the Grand. The first was commissioned by the Jamaica Assembly from Rundell's, and made by Digby Scott and Benjamin Smith in 1803–4 to be presented to the Duke of Clarence (later William IV); the service included four soup-tureens, eight sauce-tureens and six ice-pails, all decorated with panels of naval and military trophies. The Egyptian Service was assembled in the same years, but was the product of three workshops. It includes four soup-tureens by Paul Storr, eight salts and twelve sauce-boats by Scott and Smith, in which much of the ornament was derived from ancient Egypt, though intermingled with it were the prevalent Graeco-Roman motifs.

The assembling of the Grand Service, begun by the Prince of Wales in 1805, and continued for a quarter of a century until his death, was in keeping with the practice of most of the sovereigns of Europe, particularly of Denmark and Portugal, who at this period were amassing magnificent plate.

Commissions from wealthy private individuals and from institutions were on an extensive and almost as lavish a scale. A few examples, all of them manufactured by Paul Storr, will suffice to illustrate the fact: the gold font made (1797–8) for the christening of the eldest son of the fourth Duke of Portland; Lord Desborough's dinner service of eighty-two pieces (1797–8); and 125 plates for the Goldsmiths' Company (1808–11). Perhaps the most interesting and important group of commissions is that of plate for presentation to the heroes of the day, the victorious admirals and generals whose successes in battle came as such relief to the overwhelming campaigns conducted by Napoleon. Lloyd's, with their especial concern with war at sea, made presentations after Howe's victory of 1794 and again from their Patriotic Fund after the Battle of Trafalgar (1805) to some of the senior officers engaged. One of these vases (Pl. 35), made by Scott and Smith to the design of John Flaxman, ingeniously combines classical motifs with contemporary emblems: acanthus leaves round the surbase alternate with acorns representing the ships of English oak; 'Britannia triumphant' is seated holding a figure of Victory in her right hand; on the pedestal, formed by the cover, stands a finely modelled lion, between two volute handles, in which the paterae have been replaced by Tudor roses, and round which are applied rope-mouldings. An equally eclectic approach is seen in a parcel-gilt sauce-tureen of the Deccan Service in the Wellington Museum at Apsley House [6] (Pl. 37B) presented to Sir Arthur Wellesley (later Duke of Wellington) by the officers of the Army of the Deccan. Ornamented with a band of interlacing laurel wreaths and with two realistic intertwined serpents for each handle, the bowl is raised up on four elephants, placed back to back on a circular base, which is also ornamented with a band of laurel in low relief; on the broad rayed pedestal sits an oriental figure beneath an umbrella. In spite of the introduction and realistic rendering of these exotic motifs, this set of tureens of 1806 retains a predominantly classical feeling. By contrast, however, a more romantic impression is produced by a parcel-gilt candelabrum in the same museum. At each corner of the heavy triangular plinth the concave sides of which are ornamented with battle scenes in low relief, sits a soldier in contemplative attitude; above them on a fluted tambour four other soldiers, also in contemporary uniform, stand reaching up to support a fasces, from which spring six curved leafy branches, each bearing a socket at its tip. In spite of its height of 31 inches, it lacks the monumental quality that is evident in the centre-piece commissioned from Paul Storr (Pl. 40) and presented to Wellesley a few years later by the field officers of the Army of Portugal; only a little taller, it is by contrast a restrained and monumental work. A massive but graceful two-handled vessel of low proportions, surmounted by a finial figure of Victory posed on a globe, is set on a large square plinth magnificently engraved, at the corners of which are piled muskets and flags; the remainder of the ornament is restricted to the neo-classical repertoire and is therefore without

[6] Victoria and Albert Museum, *Small Picture Book, No. 33, Regency Domestic Silver.*

special associations; it includes gadrooning, laurel leaves, both conventionally wreathed and more naturally rendered, lanceolate and acanthus leaves, and fleshy vine-tendrils for the handles.

Although the Duke of Wellington was not appointed Ambassador to the French Court until 1814, his issue of plate contained much of an earlier date; this he retained as a perquisite, as had other ambassadors, though he was one of the last to be allowed to do so. Among it is a gilt sugar-vase of 1810–11 by Benjamin and James Smith (Pl. 39) which closely resembles a set of eight of 1809–10 in the Royal Collection, and four others made five years earlier by Scott and Smith for Earl Howe. In their ornament it seems that Tatham's strictures (see below, p. 74) had already been heeded, or even anticipated, inasmuch as the luxurious profusion of Imperial Roman ornament is there represented to the full on a domestic vessel, no more than eight inches in height, the design of which would lose little of its monumentality if cut in stone many times as high. From the same issue and from the same year, but by Paul Storr to the order of Rundell's, is a centre-piece which serves as a fruit-bowl, one of a number of similar vessels, set in a circular basket supported by three caryatids, each standing on the arm of a triangular base raised on satyrs' masks with swags of fruit between. Here no extrinsic motif had to be introduced to dispel the purely classical impression imparted by the tripod form and the three caryatids, each with her two thyrsi crossed in saltire with those of her neighbours.

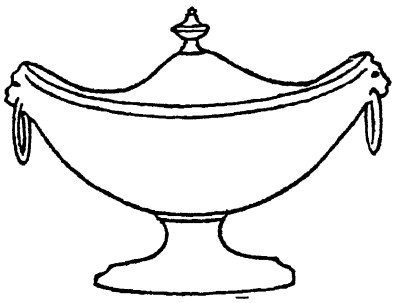
If William Kent (1684–1748) had shown the advantages of designing a house and its interior furnishings as a single entity, Robert Adam believed that an architect should be responsible for every detail, and accordingly produced designs for all kinds of furniture, among them articles of plate.[7] When in Rome in 1756, Adam found Allan Ramsay, a former acquaintance, who had just published his *Dialogue on Taste* in friendly rebuttal of Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty* (1753). Whereas the empirical and pugnacious Hogarth intended 'to fix the fluctuating ideas of taste', his book was rather in the nature of a belated apology of the Baroque and Rococo styles (indeed, the candlesticks he illustrated were those in fashion when he was still apprenticed as an engraver on silver) with continuous belittlements of classical art. Ramsay, on the other hand, spoke out for Gothic, and being drawn into the Graeco-Roman controversy, next preferred Greek to Roman. In spite both of occasional studies of Gothic remains (similar to, but less advanced than those of classical remains) and of some enthusiasts who built in imitation of the Gothic style, its motifs were much more widely used in furniture than in plate – even in church plate until A. W. N. Pugin's advocacy coincided with the rise of the Tractarians. Indeed it was only in repetitive pierced work that pointed or cusped tracery or quatrefoils were used, particularly on the sides of salt-cellars and sugar-bowls, and even then perhaps derivatively from the pierced galleries on tables of the Chippendale gothic vogue.

Objects from ancient Egypt had no English protagonist, though many were illustrated in de Caylus' *Receuil*. Opportunities were given for the use of Egyptian motifs in English plate when presentations were required for the victors in the Egyptian battles.[8] Thereafter Egyptian motifs were sometimes mingled with others of classical origin, though they were never popular.

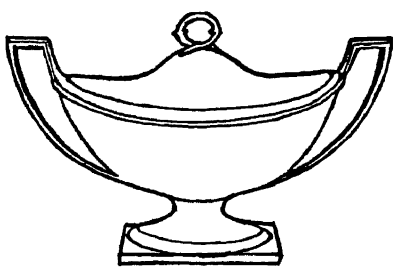
From further East, naturalistic motifs were derived from the Indian scene (see above, Pl. 37B) and elsewhere, but with regard neither for their local significance nor indeed for the styles of indigenous art. *Chinoiseries* retained for a short time their old allure, appropriately on tea-caddies (Pl. 36A), tea-urns, tea-pots and epergnes until the discontinuance of the Rococo style. But for a short time Chinese symbols, scarcely studied and little understood, like the rest of Eastern art, were sometimes engraved on tea-caddies during the transition from the Rococo to the Adam style (Pl. 36A).

[7] Some of his designs are preserved in Sir John Soane's Museum, see Pl. 34.

[8] E.g. the Battle of the Nile Cup, in the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich; repr. N. M. Penzer, *Paul Storr*, 1954, p. 106, Pl. XIV.



c. 1790



c. 1800

Fig. 1. Tureens.

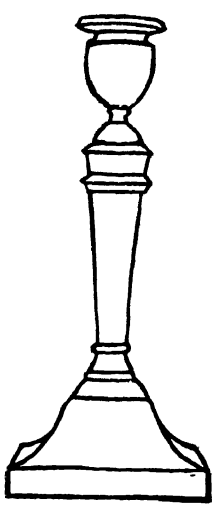


Fig. 2. Candlestick of a type common 1775–90.

Classical antiquities had never been without their devotees and students – even in the most anti-classical style of all, Rococo, some classical motifs were introduced. In addition to the predominantly classical basis of University studies, the illustrated publications of Winckelmann, Piranesi, Stuart and Revett, de Caylus, Adam and others during the latter half of the eighteenth century [9] prepared the way for its revival. In a narrower circle, the *Discourses* of the first President of the Royal Academy, and the writings of Fuseli, its Professor of Painting, helped to instil in students of design a high regard for the finest works of antiquity. It is significant that the best known designers of plate, John Flaxman (1755–1827), his intimate friend Thomas Stothard (1755–1844), Charles Catton (1756–1819) (until his emigration to the United States in 1806) and others should have studied there. Moreover, Flaxman, like the Adam brothers, spent several years in Italy, and, after working for Josiah Wedgwood, undertook designs for plate and attracted the attention of Philip Rundell and his partners. The neo-classical style was indeed deliberately fostered as a matter of business by a nucleus of influential employers, including Adam, Boulton, Wedgwood and Rundell. In particular, the perceptive and enterprising Boulton realized that even if his own education was deficient, taste played an important part in the lives of those with money, and he therefore set himself to ensure that it was evident in his plate, Sheffield plate, ormolu, cut-steel jewellery, and other fine products.

Another theorist, the architect Charles Heathcot Tatham (1772–1842), published the first book of English designs specially for plate [10] as opposed to those intended for more general purposes – in which he complained that 'instead of Massiveness, the principal characteristic of good Plate, light and insignificant forms have prevailed, to the utter exclusion of all good ornament whatever'. It is true that much plate of the later

[9] Their works are briefly discussed and their contemporary influence assessed by J. Lees-Milne, *The Age of Adam*, 1947, pp. 42–56.

[10] *Designs for Ornamental Plate*, 1806.

Hanoverian period was intended to appear light, and was indeed often very light in weight for its size, but it was by no means devoid of good ornament. Nevertheless as a champion of Roman architecture, Tatham's arguments may have helped to direct designers towards the Regency style.

More recently, J. Hambridge and L. D. Caskey [11] have convincingly demonstrated that Greek potters designed and made their wares, as the architects their public buildings, accurately in accordance with two systems of proportion which are capable of infinite variation and yet are easily delineated with the aid of dividers and a ruler. Geometrical proportions were much the more frequently employed, arithmetical proportions scarcely at all. One of the former recurs very frequently, namely that of the golden, or divine, section; it was revived during the Renaissance and used, to cite but one example, in a silver-gilt cup (belonging to Dr C. H. Josten) made in Nuremberg in the later sixteenth century. It is not surprising therefore that it was again applied to plate, as well as ceramics, during the neo-classical revival and an illustration is provided by Boileau's design of 1800 for the Doncaster Race Cup.[12] Nevertheless, these isolated examples are given here to emphasize the completeness of the return to ancient inspiration and should not be considered to reflect anything like a universal attention to these principles of design.

Much greater evidence is available about the ornament of neo-classical plate. Much of its permanent value and a strong reason for its repeated use and revival lie in the fact that for the most part the motifs represented, though in a style or on an object that can be meticulously dated, are themselves natural, and therefore timeless and impersonal.

The wide range of classical motifs were ultimately derived from vegetable, animal, geometrical and artificial forms. In the first and largest group are included the acanthus leaf and the lanceolate leaf, usually placed side by side as a calyx or surbase; the bay or laurel leaf, both braided as a garland and in a continuous band; the leaf as a sheath at the springing of handles or applied to them; vine leaves and tendrils and bunches of grapes; anthemion, honeysuckle, lotus, or palmette; the oak leaf and acorn, as a finial; and the husk, usually graduated, in swags or pendent; heads of rams, satyrs (Pl. 38), lions, etc.; skulls of oxen, small infants, often incorporated in rinceaux, and other human figures in low or full relief in imitation of antique sculpture, though often in contemporary attire. In the second group the fret (key-pattern or meander) appears in great variety, as well as fluting (spiral, or straight, deep or shallow, tapering or regular), gadrooning, guilloche, and beading (paralleled by the half-pearl borders of watches, brooches, rings, etc.). In the last group medallions, containing imitations of antique busts or figures, oval and circular paterae, festoons of drapery, and ribbons, and the wave-pattern.

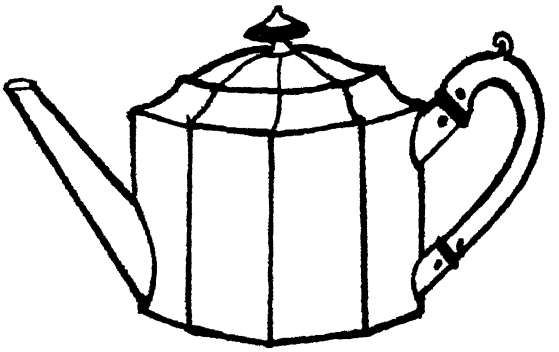
These ornaments were carried out in all the techniques available to the goldsmith. Gilding or parcel-gilding of important pieces was frequent (Pl. 37B, 40); solid gold was rarely used. Enamelling was much used on watch-cases and other jewellery. The weight of metal employed, like the quality of workmanship, varies from the lavish and magnificent to the mean and skimped. Boulton once wrote to Fothergill, 'How can I expect the public to countenance rubbish from Soho, while they can secure sound and perfect work from any other quarter?' There are many large castings of finely modelled and finished figures; the standard of chasing and embossing had never been surpassed in London. Where the commission demanded, nothing was spared to produce the desired effect.

Better known by name and far more numerous than the designers or writers are the goldsmiths themselves who effected their ideas. The life and works of the greatest maker, the last great silversmith, Paul Storr, are the subject of a monograph.[13] He was apprenticed to the Swedish immigrant Andrew Fogelberg, whose London work dates from 1770 and is notable for applied silver

[11] L. D. Caskey, *Geometry of Greek Vases*, 1922.

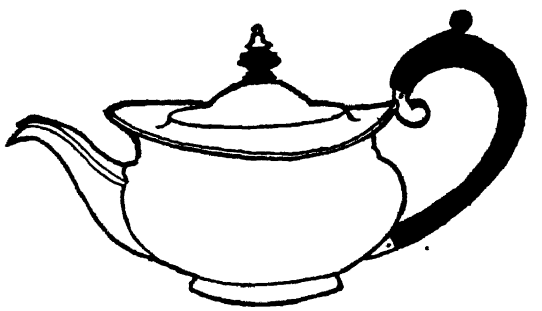
[12] Victoria and Albert Museum, *Small Picture Book, No. 35, Adam Silver*, Pl. 30.

[13] N. M. Penzer, *Paul Storr, the last of the Goldsmiths*, 1954.

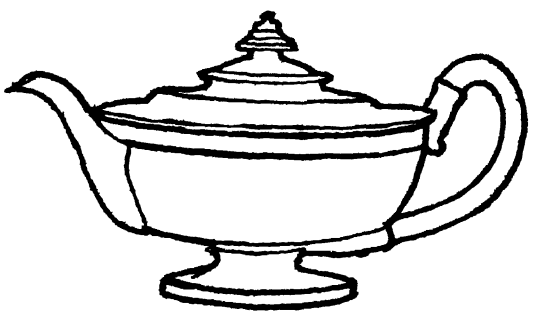


c. 1790

c. 1800



c. 1810

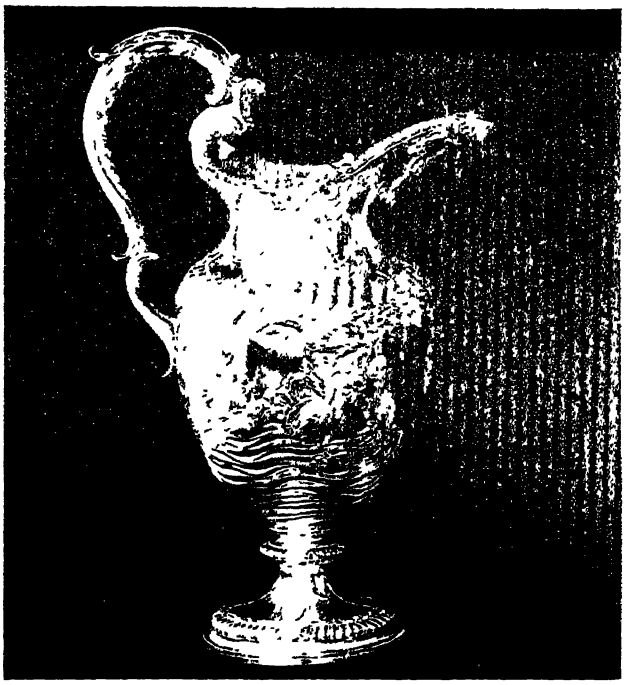


c. 1810

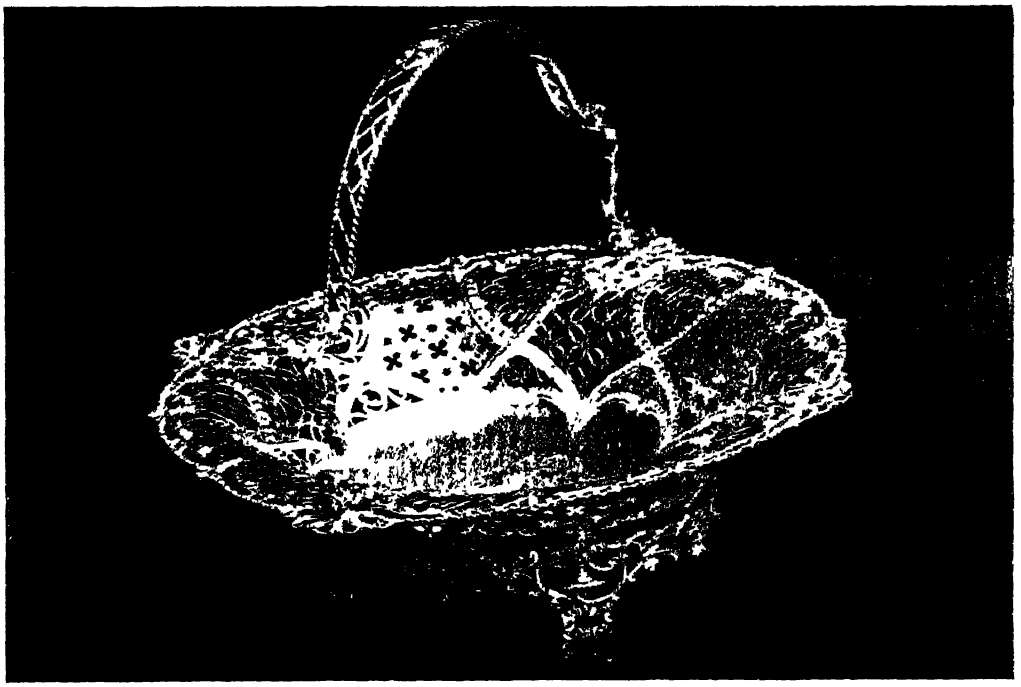
Fig. 3. Teapots of the period.

cameos, an idea perhaps derived from his neighbour James Tassie (1735–99), though it was not unknown in Tudor, early Stuart and Huguenot plate. When Storr obtained his freedom in 1792 his work resembled his master's, just as de Lamerie's had resembled that of Harache, but in the next five years during his Piccadilly partnership with Frisbee and perhaps through Tassie's introductions, he had established a reputation for himself as a craftsman of outstanding talent. The mastery displayed in the Portland font (see above, p. 72) was maintained in all his later work (Pl. 40). After that of Paul Storr, perhaps the reputation of Hester Bateman (cf. Pl. 37A) is next in public estimation. Yet there were many other equally original and distinguished individuals and many firms more productive of fine plate than that conducted by the Batemans between 1774 and 1840. Thomas Heming (cf. Pl. 33A) was given the Royal warrant and was responsible for much excellent plate in the Rococo and French Louis XV styles, and latterly in the neo-classical style. In this appointment his successors were the partners Rundell, Bridge and Rundell, with whom Storr was the principal plate worker; they not only had their individual and joint marks but engraved their names followed by AVRIFICES REGIS ET PRINCIPIS WALLIAE LONDINI FECERUNT. Other firms who put out work were Portal and Gearing, and later Green and Ward, both of Ludgate Hill.

Parallel, but not necessarily connected, developments were affecting not only the processes of manufacture and sale of plate, but also the vessels for which it was used. As some social practices were discontinued and others were introduced, so the manufacture of plate for the former purposes gradually ceased and the development of new forms for the latter was begun. A noticeable result of the search for homogeneous domestic interiors is the development of matching services, tea-services, dinner-services of considerable size with matching plates and dishes, matching tureens for soup and sauce, and huge sets of matching cutlery. An extreme example is the magnificent Howe double breakfast service of 1812–13 by Storr, of 16 pieces, weighing together nearly 800 ounces.



(A) THOMAS HEMING. Gilt ewer, 1763. *Sir W Williams Wynn.*



(B) WILLIAM PLUMMER. Basket, 1767. *Holburne of Menstrie Museum, Bath.*

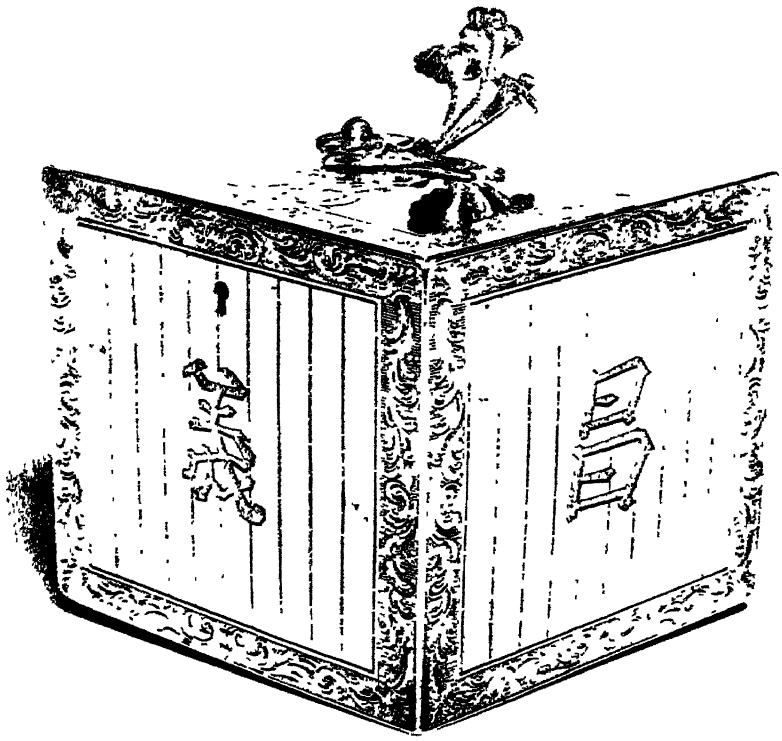
PLATE 33

DANIEL SMITH and ROBERT SHARP, designed by Robert Adam. The Richmond Cup, gilt, 1770. Height 19 in. *Marquess of Zetland.*

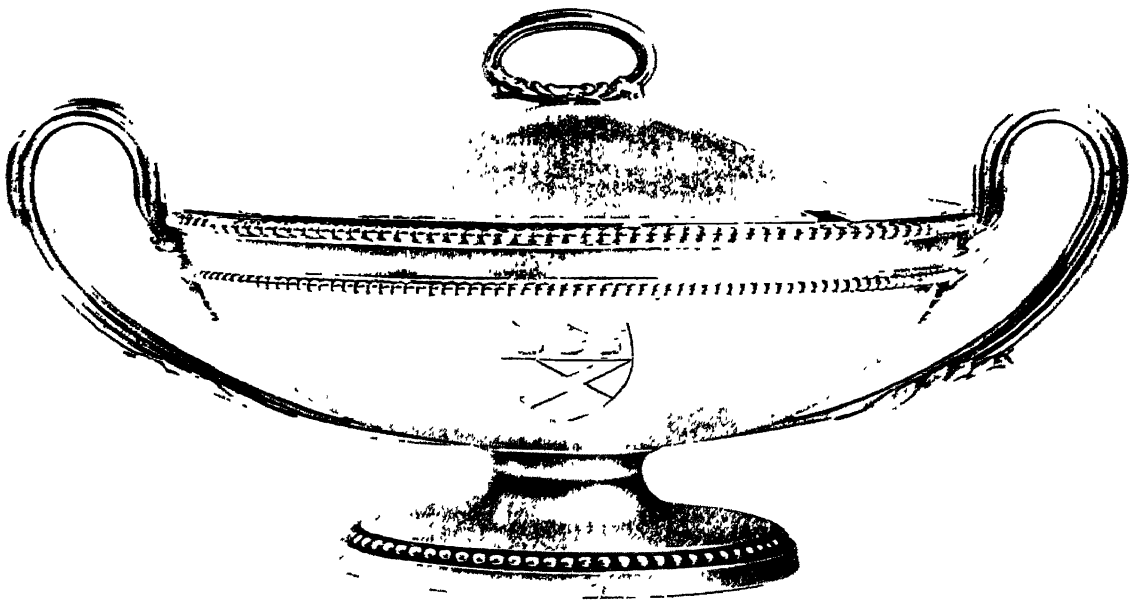
PLATE 34

DIGBY SCOTT and BENJAMIN SMITH, designed by John Flaxman. The Trafalgar Vase, 1805. Height 17 in. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*

PLATE 35

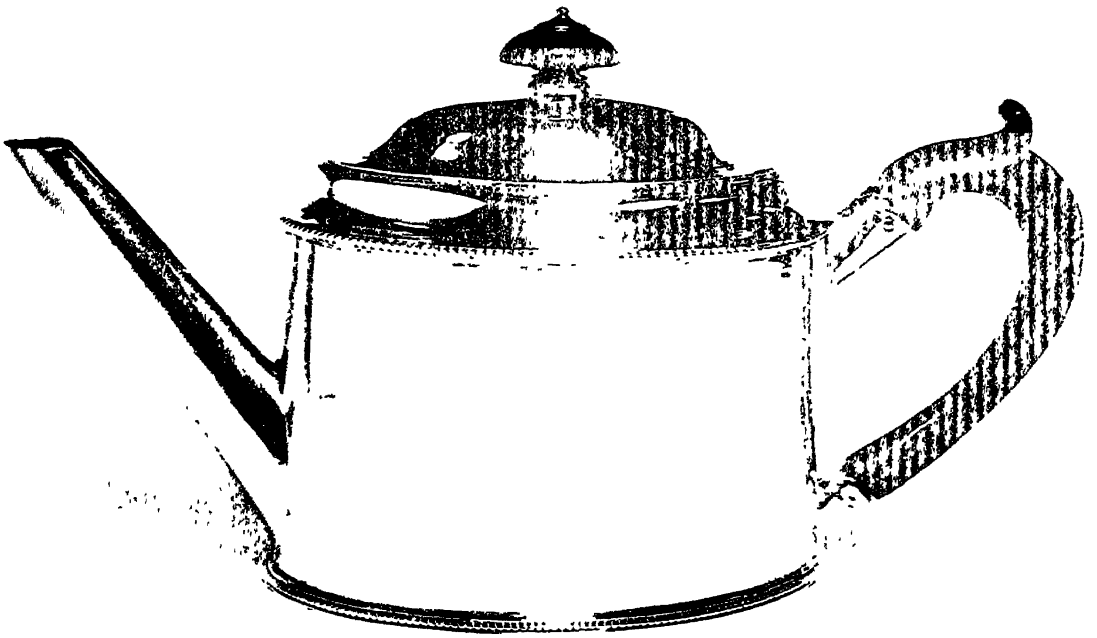


(A) AUGUSTUS LE SAGE. Tea-caddy, 1767. Height 3½ in. *Ashmolean Museum.*

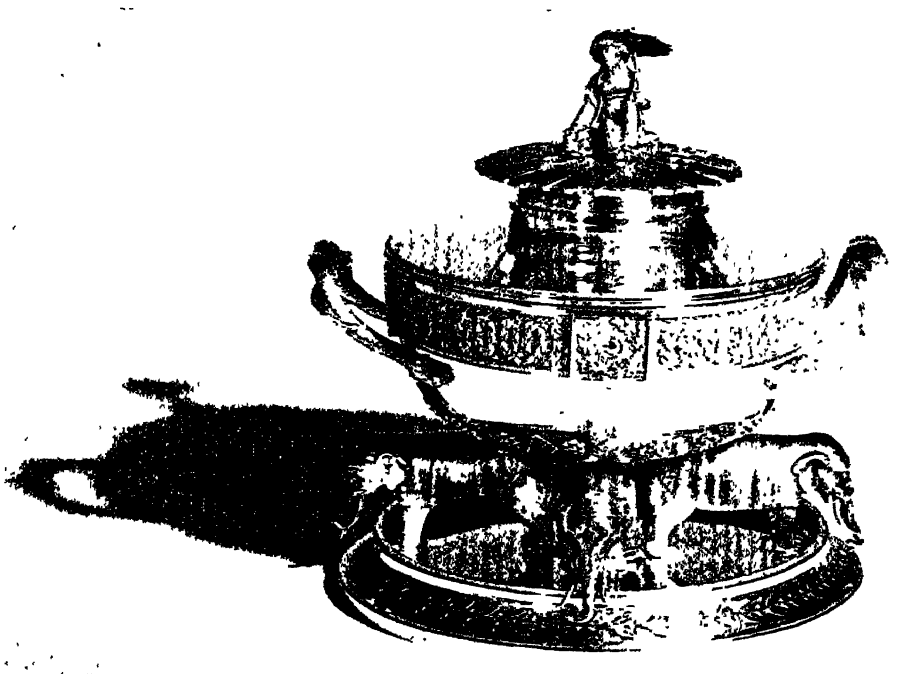


(B) RICHARD CARTER, DANIEL SMITH and ROBERT SHARP. Sauce-tureen, 1778. Height 5 in. *Ashmolean Museum.*

PLATE 36



(A) HESTER BATEMAN. Tea-pot, 1785 Height 5¾ in. *John Bell of Aberdeen Collection.*



(B) JOHN EDWARD. Sauce-tureen, parcel-gilt, 1806. Height 8 in. *Wellington Museum.*

JOHN ARNELL. Gilt vase, 1772. Height 8¼ in. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*

BENJAMIN and JAMES SMITH. Gilt sugar-vase, 1810. Height 8 in. *Wellington Museum.*

PAUL STORR. Parcel-gilt centrepiece, 1810. Height 33 in. *Wellington Museum.*

PLATE 40

Other innovations were 'argyles' (small vessels with lid and spout for serving gravy), goblets, stirrup-cups, honey-pots, tea-urns, toasted-cheese dishes, toast-racks, egg-cups and stands, and cruet stands with glass bottles for several kinds of sauce in addition to wine and vinegar. Some vessels like the 'argyle' were experimental; others, like the tea-urn, stirrup-cup and toasted-cheese dish were in vogue for a comparatively short time; but most of them had come to stay.

Without reference to ecclesiastical and municipal plate, the variety of uses for which silver was found suitable at this time is very large when compared with any other material; tea-cups and saucers were exclusively made of ceramics which rivalled the previous metals or their baser substitutes for many other uses; glass was unchallenged in the service of wine; on decanters and sauce-bottles, silver played a subsidiary part in their embellishment but a superior role in salt-cellars, mustard-pots, sugar-pails and cream pails. Wood was a useful ancillary, as were ivory and cane, for handles of tea- and coffee-pots, or the base of coasters. A list of the principal items made of silver, entirely or partly, is set out at this point.

Tankards, mugs, goblets, stirrup-cups; punch-bowls and ladles; wine-coolers, ice-pails; wine-funnels; wine-labels; wine-coasters (decanter stands); epergnes; centre-pieces; baskets; toast-racks; soup-tureens, mazarine-dishes (fitted with a strainer, for fish, etc.), entrée-dishes; supper-dishes; toasted-cheese dishes; serving dishes, and covers, of various sizes; plates for soup, meat and other courses; sauce-tureens and sauce-boats; 'argyles'; dish-crosses; dish-rings; cruet-frames and fittings; sugar-castors; salt-cellars; pepper-castors or pots; mustard-pots; salt- and mustard-spoons; knives, forks and spoons; ladles for soup and gravy; fish-slices and trowels; asparagus-servers; grape-scissors; skewers; marrow-scoops; candlesticks; candelabra; chamber-sticks; taper-sticks; trays; tea-pots; tea-caddies and caddy-spoons; tea-urns; coffee-pots; milk-jugs; hot-water jugs with or without lamps; basins, baskets and bowls for sugar; sugar-nippers and tongs; tea-spoons; inkstands; waiters (salvers); hand-bells; pap-boats; and a variety of indeterminate small wares which come near to being jewellery, such as snuff-boxes, mounts of walking-sticks, watch-cases and chatelaines.

The complex Rococo forms, with their irregular and asymmetrical shapes (Pl. 33A, B) gave place to simpler ones based on the circle, oval, square, hexagon and octagon. In their purest forms, they were found to provide suitable outlines for trays and salvers.

For some of the objects listed above it was possible to use the shape most characteristic of the period, notably for race-cups, large and small ornamental vases, tea-urns, jugs, hot-water jugs, pepper-castors and even 'argyles' (see Pl. 34).

A second shape with close affinities, suitable for vases, urns and tea-pots, offers an instructive comparison between plate and ceramics. In the Victoria and Albert Museum are a silver-gilt vase of 1775 by John Arnell (Pl. 38) and a vase of black basaltes ware, marked 'Wedgwood' [14] and made about a decade later. They differ a little in ornament and proportion (the cover of the latter is less exactly a hemisphere), yet the oviform shape, the handles, the striped effect and the swags of drapery offer striking parallels. Of about 1775 – and thus corresponding in date with the silver vase – is another marked 'Wedgwood and Bentley' of agate-ware, which has the same form of handles, though it is less remarkably similar in other respects.

For soup and sauce-tureens the former vase was compressed in both elevation and plan; the resulting form (Pl. 36B) was more pleasing when the urn was swept upwards towards each loop-handle (Fig. 1), one of many forms adapted for the salt-cellar.

For many vessels simple geometrical forms were introduced, the pure cube for tea-caddies (Pl. 36A), and the cylinder, less often round (for 'argyles') than oval (for tea-pots, tea-caddies and salts) (Pl. 37A). Although these basic shapes assumed varied accretions of superficial ornament and necessary components, such as handles, finials and spouts, during the next two decades, they

[14] W. B. Honey, *Wedgwood Ware*, 1948, Pl. 57, and also for the second comparison Pl. B.

themselves underwent more fundamental modifications by variation of their proportions and elaboration of their forms. Thus, an examination of this fundamental trend in relation to the tea-pot reveals that not only are there numerous variations in the oval plan, but also many elaborations of the superstructure with low domes and mouldings (Pl. 37A), of the sides and spout with curves, so that by the early years of the nineteenth century the only horizontal line left is often that around the base. The tureen, and with it the related forms of salt-cellar, was likewise the subject of many variations until the basic shape of both tureen and tea-pot became almost identical, that is to say of a complex bombé form on a rounded oblong plan. Efforts to design a matching tea-service perhaps influenced this trend strongly, in that the conflicting shapes of tea-pot, sugar-bowl and milk-jug found at the accession of George III were resolved by using the shape of the sugar-bowl as the master design, with its two like handles at opposite sides or at each end; on the milk jug, which was of a different size, one handle was replaced by an everted lip; on the tea-pot, the handle was suitably modified to afford insulation, while an opposed curving spout was added, usually tapering and of a compressed section; the shape of the coffee-pot was achieved either by erecting a tall concave neck on a body matching that of the tea-pot or by placing on a foot, or feet, a heightened body of similar form with handle and spout suitably heightened. However attractive these simplifications may appear, the diversity of designs made during this period, even within the limits of these four vessels, was such that a reference to the numerous exceptions will result in pointless confusions.

To other objects a variety of shapes derived more or less faithfully from antique remains were found suitable. One of the more straightforward adaptations, quite in harmony with the spirit of the neo-classical revival, was the stirrup-cup in the shape of a fox's head. The forms of the calyx-krater and volute-krater lent themselves with scarcely any alteration for wine coolers or presentation pieces respectively. Even small antique oil-lamps were copied from ceramic or bronze prototypes, perhaps more in a spirit of antiquarianism than for actual use.

From classical candelabra and altars, in stone and metal, were derived many tripod motifs. Classical architecture provided suitable designs for some objects, notably the candlestick to which Corinthian and composite columns were easily adapted. A term (inverted obelisk) surmounted by an urn for the socket was no less successfully and widely used (Fig. 2). The deep helmet-shaped jug, the four-legged salt-cellar or sugar-bowl, and tripod jugs bear further witness to the pervasive influence of ancient forms.

On the other hand it must be mentioned that many recent and traditional forms were retained for plate in constant domestic use, notably for sauce-boats, castors, salt-cellars or tankards.

The 'Hanoverian' form of spoons and forks gave way to the 'Old English' by a reversal of the curve on the tail of the handle and a lightening of the structure due to the use of machinery. The edges of the handles were often beaded, threaded or 'feathered', and their upper side ornamented with bright-cut engraving, the most typical decorative technique of the time. It was by no means confined to flat-ware, but is seldom found in conjunction with any other ornament except piercing. Its shallow curving facets enliven the patterns with sparkling reflections, in a manner impossible with the deep channels cut into the metal according to the traditional technique, still then used for lettering, coats of arms, and crests.

During the later years of the period form and ornament reveal other characteristics which foreshadow the full flowering of the Regency period, as well as combinations of Romanticism, further flung eclecticism and other influences that are not generally obvious until the nineteenth century was well advanced.

Pottery and Porcelain

Pottery and Porcelain

PATRICK SYNGE-HUTCHINSON

The decade immediately following the first half of the eighteenth century may be regarded as a period at which the ceramic craft of England, having emerged from the pre-porcelain era, was about to establish itself on a basis that would enable it to play no small part in the movement which, during the next 50 years, was to effect the gradual transformation of this country from a rural into an industrial community.

The setting up of factories making soft-paste porcelain at Bow and Chelsea, from about 1745 onwards, was soon followed by undertakings at Bristol, Worcester, Derby, Longton Hall, Liverpool and Lowestoft, all of which, unlike their principal rivals at Meissen and Sèvres, relied on private enterprise rather than Royal patronage for their establishment.

In Staffordshire the coming of the china factories had imparted a fresh impetus to the making of earthenware figures and other wares, for, whereas the earlier potters had created a style whose charm lay in its native character and lack of sophistication, a new movement was now beginning which, gaining in scope and strength, was to bring Staffordshire, through the innovations of Josiah Wedgwood, an international market that has survived to the present day. It does not of course follow that the productions of the second half of the century were in an aesthetic sense superior to those of the first. In many respects quite the reverse is true. Names like those of Wedgwood, Thomas Whieldon, and the Wood family of Burslem, Ralph senior, his brother Aaron and their sons Ralph junior and Enoch, are associated with the highest standards of craftsmanship, but it must be remembered that all these, with the exception of the two younger Woods, were born and reared in the traditions of the earlier potters. Wedgwood alone was responsible for the great changes that were soon to take place.

The population of England and Wales was rising, due largely, as G. M. Trevelyan points out in his *English Social History*, to 'The Act of 1751' which placed a high tax on spirits and forbade their sale by distillers and shopkeepers. Not only did this do much to counteract the terrible ravages caused by the drinking of cheap gin, but also helped to popularize tea as a national beverage, which, after the middle years of the century, became a formidable rival to alcohol with all classes both in town and country. Porcelain was a costly material to produce and no doubt the potters of Staffordshire and elsewhere found an increasing demand for tea equipages which were within the means of the less well-to-do. Figures too, both human and animal, had greatly increased in popularity, principally as a result of importations from the Continent, especially Meissen, and imitations made by the English porcelain factories.

The makers of the traditional salt and lead-glazed wares had now to adapt their production to meet these new demands, and it was perhaps unfortunate that they found it necessary to seek inspiration from the more sophisticated styles of foreign Courts and Graeco-Roman art rather than pursuing their native craft within the sphere of its own limitations.

Salt-glazed stoneware had, since the beginning

of the century, been a staple product of the potteries, and the use of plaster-of-Paris moulds, introduced it is said by Ralph Daniel in 1740, made possible the casting of such pieces by means of pouring the liquid clay slip into the mould and allowing the porous surface of the plaster to absorb the moisture. The mould was then removed and the piece made ready for firing. Hollow vessels were cast in this way while dishes, lids, etc., were made by pressing a flat piece of clay into the surface of the mould. These methods greatly facilitated increased production and by the middle of the century salt-glazed ware had obtained a considerable market, some being exported to Holland. Two Dutchmen settling at Hot Lane, now Cobridge, are supposed to have introduced into this country the enamel painting with which, in a further attempt to emulate porcelain, much of it was decorated after 1750. This form of painting adopted by local artists was of various types and employed a strikingly contrasting palette including intense blues, pinks and greens. Besides Chinese themes, floral subjects and coloured grounds were used, presumably in imitation of Sèvres. Commemorative pieces include teapots celebrating the wedding of George III in 1761 and portraits of popular figures such as Frederick the Great, at that time an ally of this country. Figures of various subjects, mostly inspired by Meissen originals, are known (on the evidence of his account book) to have been painted with enamel colours in the Kentish Town workshop of William Duesbury, later proprietor of the Derby Porcelain Factory. At Liverpool, transfer printing, generally of a brick-red colour, was applied with most pleasing effects by Saddler and Green. Two figures of Turks (Plate 41A) of about 1760 are illustrative of the influence of porcelain being more or less direct copies of models made by J. J. Kaendler at Meissen in 1745. William Read in his *Staffordshire Pottery Figures* states that the models in question were probably made at Longton Hall by William Littler. They are also known in Bow porcelain. Another method of decorating salt-glazed pieces was by filling incised patterns with blue colouring, a type known to collectors as 'Scratch blue'.

In spite of the fact that this ware continued to be made for more than twenty years after 1750, it is not really typical of the period. Its extreme hardness and slightly abrasive surface, which scratched silver, rendered it less agreeable to public taste by comparison with the cream-coloured wares perfected by Wedgwood, and by 1770 its manufacture had largely declined, ceasing altogether before 1790.

Although the importance of Staffordshire pottery makes it usual to discuss it quite separately from that made elsewhere, we may at this point make a brief digression in order to mention another class which, like salt-glaze, was to become outmoded by the use of new materials, namely the tin-glazed earthenware made principally at Lambeth, Bristol and Liverpool and known as English delftware. This type, largely derived from Italian and Dutch sources, was made in England as early as the sixteenth century. By the beginning of the eighteenth century the Chinese influence had become predominant in the style of decoration, and continued to some extent during the remaining period of its manufacture. In addition to the simple blue-and-white, palette painting in polychrome was used extensively on a great variety of articles; also transfer painting. Besides plates, dishes and bowls, characteristic examples of English delftware are to be found in the shape of puzzle jugs, drug jars, pill-slabs for apothecaries and the so-called bricks with perforated tops, intended either for flower holders or receptacles for ink and quill pens. A large number of tiles was also made (Pl. 42A), a typical feature of some eighteenth-century houses being a recess lined with such tiles and containing a ceremonial washbasin and water bottle. They were also used in the surrounds of fireplaces and for lining the walls of larders and shops.[1] Dated inscriptions occur frequently, also political slogans and the recording of events such as Lunardi's balloon ascent in 1783. In spite of the latter date delftware had largely gone out of fashion by the last quarter of the century, and like salt-glaze was not made after 1790.

[1] See 'An Introduction to Bristol Delftware Tiles', by Louis Lipski, *The Connoisseur*, May 1953.

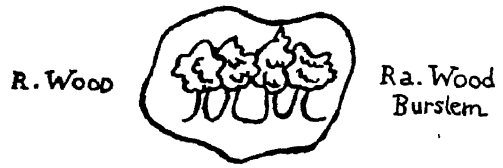
As we have already seen, it is in many instances quite impossible to draw an arbitrary date line within which we may state what is characteristic of one half of a century and not of the other. Many types are transitional, and it is therefore only possible to note their production during the particular period with which we are dealing. In this category must be included the mottled or tortoiseshell wares chiefly associated with the name of the famous Staffordshire potter Thomas Whieldon (born 1719) whose factory was at Fenton Low and with whom the young Wedgwood was working from 1754–9. These mottled effects were brought about by the blending of metallic oxides in a clear lead-glaze which was applied over a cream earthenware body. Manganese produced the rich madder-brown of the tortoiseshell, while other colours were obtained by the use of oxides of copper, iron and cobalt which caused brown, green, yellow, blue, purple and grey tones to mingle in the fluid glaze with pleasantly harmonious effects. Glazes stained with either a single colour, or in the various combinations described above, were used on pieces with both applied and moulded reliefs. They include teapots, coffee-pots, tea-caddies and the whole range of table wares. Figures, both human and animal, were also coloured in this way. The teapots and similar pieces sometimes show evidence of the silversmith's influence (Pl. 41B), while the later figures were in many instances suggested by foreign originals. They are nevertheless, unmistakably the work of a native craftsman, and as such no doubt found their way on to the shelves and mantelpieces of the local homesteads. Under the present heading mention may also be made of the agate or marbled effects obtained by the blending of various coloured clays. In the 'solid agate' these clays were used to form the body, but marbling was also simulated by applying them over a plain surface. A brilliant black glaze on red earthenware is also typical. It is often seen on tea and coffee-pots ornamented with small reliefs. The same shapes, together with a similar glaze, were also used at Jackfield in Shropshire, though the latter type is without relief decoration.

During his partnership with Whieldon, Wedgwood was continually experimenting with both technical and material improvements made in order to stimulate an increased demand for their products, as in spite of reduced prices lack of public interest had already been reflected in a steadily declining market. Among these improvements was the perfecting of a green glaze which he used in combination with yellow on teapots and other vessels made in imitation of fruit and vegetable forms, known as 'Cauliflower' and 'Pineapple' wares. Although excavations on the site of his factory show that Whieldon made the whole range of Staffordshire pottery favoured in his day, his productions were not marked. His fame as a potter, however, has caused a whole class to be identified with his name. He was a man of great integrity, and before his death in 1795 became Sheriff of his county.

The name of the Wood family is to many only connected with the making of Toby Jugs. They were, in fact, extremely versatile in their output. Of the two elder brothers, Aaron (born 1717) was the most celebrated 'block cutter' of his time, that is, he prepared the first intaglio moulds in alabaster or other hard substance from which, after the taking of a master cast, the plaster moulds already described were eventually obtained. He worked for most of the leading Staffordshire potters, including Whieldon, and was probably at some time in partnership with his brother Ralph. He is also credited with the making of some of the most interesting figures of which the so-called 'Pew Groups' are notable examples. Aaron's brother, Ralph (born 1715), and his son, Ralph junior (born 1748), besides making useful wares were, from about 1765 onwards, responsible for a large output of figures coloured in the Whieldon style. It is generally agreed, however, that they themselves were principally concerned with the

Incised

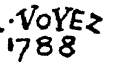
Fig. 1. On a 'block' in the British Museum.



1 2 3

All Impressed

Fig. 2. 1 and 2 are believed to be the marks of R. Wood senior. 2 is supposed to be a rebus on the family name. About 1770. 3 is believed to be the mark of R. Wood junior. 1772–95.



Impressed

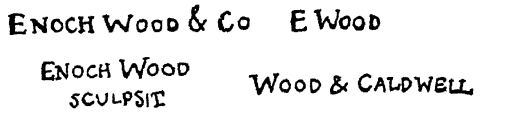
Fig. 3. Signature on a 'Fair Hebe' jug.

technicalities of manufacture rather than the creation of the types for which their name has become famous, and the best of the later models are confidently attributed to an itinerant artist of French extraction named Voyez. John Voyez was born about 1740 and was trained as a jeweller. On first coming to London he worked for a time at this trade and also as a carver for an artificial stone manufactury, exhibiting work in both wax and artificial stone at the Society of Artists in London, 1767–8. Josiah Wedgwood was originally responsible for bringing him to Staffordshire in 1768, but his habits were totally at variance with the former's high standards of moral rectitude, and after his disorderly conduct had led to a term of imprisonment their association terminated abruptly, though Wedgwood thought so highly of Voyez's abilities that he tried to deny his services to rival potters by bribing him not to work for them.[2] But Voyez was not to be tempted and is known on the evidence of signed pieces to have worked for both Humphrey Palmer of Hanley and T. Hales of Cobridge. His association with the Wood factory is based on stylistic grounds, as no examples are known which bear both his signature and Ralph Wood's factory mark. The grotesque vessels known as Toby Jugs are perfect examples of rural English pottery of this period, adorning as they did the chimney pieces of farm houses and cottages. It is thought that their original form was inspired by engravings of 'Toby Philpot', the subject of a song called 'The Brown Jug' translated from the Latin by Francis Fawkes and published in 1761. The subjects are, however, considerably varied, names being applied to them such as 'The Thin Man', 'The Planter', 'Martha Gunn', 'Prince Hal', (Pl. 42c), etc. In the catalogue of the late Captain Price's collection it is suggested that the last named represents George IV, when Prince of Wales, masquerading at a Brighton ball as Bluff King Hal. Toby Jugs were made by other potters besides the Woods, and have continued to the present day, generally with steadily declining merit. Well known examples of Voyez's work are the rustic jugs moulded in the form of a tree trunk with figures in relief, and an inscription 'Fair Hebe' (Pl. 42b). These are often signed and dated 1788.[3] Other figures from the Ralph Wood factory include copies of originals by Paul Louis Cyfflé of Luneville, musicians, pastoral and classical subjects and satirical groups such as 'The Vicar and Moses' in a double-decked pulpit. In addition to colouring in the Whieldon style the Woods developed a method of laying the metallic oxides on under the glaze into which they were partly absorbed, a technique that produced beautiful and characteristic effects. The elder Ralph died in 1772, and his son in 1795.

Enoch (born 1759) was the son of the block-cutter Aaron. He was in partnership with his cousin from 1783–90, and James Caldwell from 1790–1818. Enoch was a modeller on his own account though his work lacks distinction. A number of busts such as those of George Washington and the preachers Whitfield and Wesley are the best known examples. The latter was modelled from life in 1781. He also made figures, some of which are of considerable size.

[2] See Herbert Read's *Staffordshire Pottery Figures*, London, 1924.

[3] The author had in his possession an example stamped with the mark ASTBURY, indicating that it was made by R. M. Astbury, who directed a factory at Fenton, 1785–1800.



All Impressed

Fig. 4. Marks used by Enoch Wood. His partnership with Caldwell was from 1790 to 1818.

During this later period the practice already used by the china factories of painting in opaque enamel colours over the glaze was adopted. This lacked the charm of the earlier methods and has not proved practical, as the colours usually flake off with the passing of time. Enoch, who did not die until 1840, came to be known as the 'Father of the Potteries'.

Some critics have accused Wedgwood of spoiling a native art by turning it into a manufacture and urging his employees to desert nature and seek inspiration in examples created by an archaic civilization; but these criticisms, although undoubtedly merited in some respects, do less than justice if they cause us to ignore his mighty achievements both in the field of technical improvement and in the setting up of a great industry demanding the highest standards, not only in the materials used but in the craftsmanship applied to them. Even the most individual spirits cannot remain uninfluenced by the tastes and fashions of their times, and in this respect Wedgwood was not the creator of the neo-classical movement, though he found himself in complete harmony with the aims and ideals of its devotees. Although as a potter he may not have been a great creative artist, he was undoubtedly an extremely competent one; and it is surely remarkable that a man who had received only an elementary education should have been able to engage successfully in experiments that today would be regarded as the work of highly skilled experts.

A man of strong social and moral convictions, his sympathies lay with the American Colonies in their fight for independence. He also joined the campaign for the abolition of slavery. A medallion of a slave in black and white Jasper ware, modelled at the factory by William Hackwood, and inscribed 'Am I not a man and a brother' was adopted as the seal of the Slave Emancipation Society, of which Wedgwood was a keen supporter. Yet in spite of these activities his achievements secured for him the highest social contacts, including the frequent patronage of Royalty. The *London Ledger*, 1793–1806 shows an order placed by Queen Charlotte in 1795, listed [4] as follows:

'12 Milkpans	6 Dog Pans
Sundries	3 Dog Pans
18 Plates Green Ivy	Silver Spout Teapot
2 Teapots	Jasper Vases and Gerandoles
6 Plates Green Ivy	2 Toy Tea Sets Sandwich Set'

Born in 1730 at Burslem in Staffordshire, Josiah Wedgwood was, at the age of 14, apprenticed to his brother Thomas who had inherited the family business known as the Churchyard Pottery. His apprenticeship lasted for five years, but it seems unlikely that he left the Churchyard before 1752, when he went to Stoke and entered into a partnership with John Harrison at the factory of Thomas Alders. This does not appear to have been of long duration and was followed, as we have seen, by his association with Whieldon from 1754–9. During this time he accumulated sufficient capital and experience to set up on his own account at the Ivy House, Burslem, where he continued to produce the Whieldon types with improvements in the shapes and glazes. Being a man of great foresight and business acumen, he was quick to realize that these were already declining in popularity, and to see before him the possibility of capturing a large market if he could offer to the public something which should be without the practical disadvantages of salt-glaze and at the same time of a sufficiently stable body and colour to be produced in large quantities at a price that would make it available to all classes. To this end he set about a further refining of the cream-coloured earthenware body used by Whieldon and the earlier potters. His business premises

[4] *Catalogue of Early Wedgwood Pottery Exhibition*, Josiah Wedgwood & Sons, 1951.

were extended in 1764 to include the neighbouring Brick House Works, later known as The Bell House, and by 1765 he had so far progressed in the making of cream ware as to obtain the patronage of Queen Charlotte and the right to name his new product Queensware, a type which with continued improvements was to capture a world market. The early factory decoration of Queensware is of a simple classical style, but much was sold in the white to be painted elsewhere, as well as being sent to Liverpool for transfer printing by Saddler and Green. It was readily adaptable to every kind of use and Wedgwood made from it articles ranging from dairy and culinary equipment to the Imperial Russian Service, consisting of 952 pieces, made in 1773 to the order of the Empress Catherine II and known as the 'Frog Service', owing to the fact that it was to be placed in the Palace of La Grenouille near St Petersburg and has the device of a green frog in a shield painted on the border of each piece (Pl. 43A). It is further decorated with English views in dark purple monochrome. The eventual cost of this service was about £3,500, on which only a small profit was made.

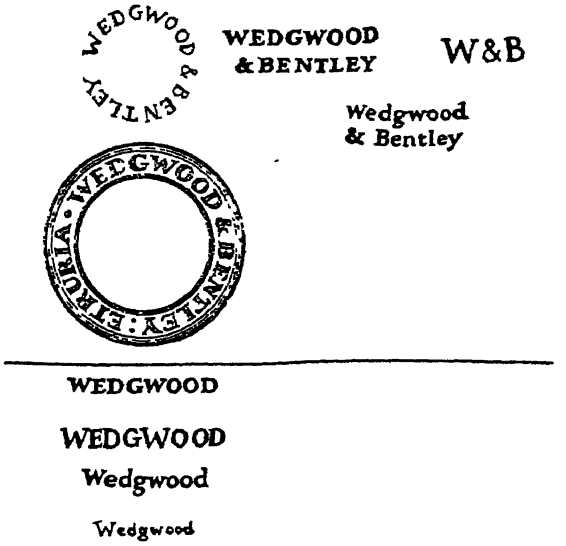


Fig. 5. Specimens of the marks generally used by Wedgwood. Those above the line are of the Wedgwood and Bentley period, 1769–80; those below are later marks, from 1771 on useful wares, and from 1780 onwards on all classes. The mark was of various sizes, the letters being sometimes in upper and sometimes lower case. All impressed.

While visiting Liverpool in 1762 Wedgwood first met the merchant Thomas Bentley, who, it is said, inspired him with his love for the antique. The friendship and mutual interest between the two men grew steadily, and in 1768 a partnership was decided upon and Wedgwood commenced the building of the great manufactory just outside Burslem which he named 'Etruria', Greek vases at that time being thought Etruscan. In the same year he opened a large London showroom in Newport Street.

The partnership with Bentley was for the making of ornamental pieces only, the ordinary wares continuing for a few more years to be made at the Bell House. By 1769 the premises at 'Etruria' were completed and opened, and Wedgwood was now fairly launched on his projects to emulate the examples of antiquity.

In his search for materials other than the cream and marble bodies suitable for this purpose, he had once again made use of a local product, namely the black unglazed pottery known as 'Egyptian Black'. This he improved and refined to obtain a fine quality black stoneware of extreme hardness from which he made many vases and other pieces, naming them 'Black Basaltes'. Some of these vases, in addition to being decorated with engine turning, were 'bronzed with light gilding, and others painted with 'encaustic' enamel in imitation of Greek vases. The latter work was probably done at an enamelling establishment opened in Chelsea in 1769 under the supervision of Thomas Bentley. The Frog Service was certainly painted there. Besides the usual domestic articles a series of busts for library decoration were made in black basaltes, also figures; that of Voltaire (Pl. 44A) made about 1777 is a well-known example. It was also used for the making of small relief medallions to meet the current vogue for collecting cameos in cabinets; the originals being too costly for the ordinary purse, most people had to be contented with imitations made in inexpensive materials. Among other unglazed bodies were the buff-coloured 'cane ware' and a red stoneware called

by Wedgwood 'rosso antico'. It is interesting to note that, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the scarcity of flour was so acute that imitation pie-crusts made of cane ware were used instead of the real thing.

Best known of all Wedgwood's creations are the coloured ground or 'jasper' wares, and one has only to think of a room designed by Robert Adam to realize how admirably suited they were to the surroundings in which they were so often incorporated.

Once again the problems of composition arose and were solved by patient research and experiment. A pure white stoneware capable of tinting throughout with oxides was the basic requirement for the making of the coloured bodies and white reliefs. Barium sulphate obtained in a mineral form from Derbyshire, where it was called 'cawk', was found to be the necessary ingredient, and by the end of 1775 jasper was being made in two or three shades. The range was soon increased and instead of being tinted throughout the pieces were immersed in a solution that coloured the outer surface only, referred to as 'jasper dip'. The most usual colour is light blue; a darker blue, two shades of green, lavender, lilac, black and rarely yellow were also used; while for the famous copies of the 'Barbarini' or 'Portland Vase', started in 1786, the body was of a blue-black 'solid jasper' in imitation of the glass from which the original was made.

Many of the forms in jasper repeat those of the black basaltes and are too well known to warrant description. It was however put to innumerable uses. Wedgwood himself lists 38 different items in a single order made by a merchant in Manchester for supply to the King of Naples,[5] from which the following examples are taken:

Rings.	Coach Panels.
Snuff Boxes.	Swords.
Window Shutters.	Chairs.
Metal Boxes.	Cabinets.
Door Handles.	Watches.
Buffets.	Desks.
Chest of Drawers.	Metal Lamps.
Chatelaines.	Buckles.
Etui Cases.	Daggers.
Bell Pulls.	Opera Glasses.
Smelling Bottles, etc.	Coat Buttons.

The metal work on pieces mounted in ormolu and cut steel jewellery (Pl. 44B) was carried out by the Birmingham metal workers Boulton & Watt, with whom Wedgwood was constantly in touch.

About 1780 a white semi-porcellaneous version of the Queensware was perfected and named 'Pearl Ware'. This was used largely for services made in competition with the china makers. Silver and coloured lustres also came into use in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. A well-known example is the pink variety often found on services made in the shape of shells. Enamel painting in the Chinese style on the black basaltes was also done, though the combination appears entirely incongruous.

Wedgwood was tireless in his efforts to obtain not only the highest standards of workmanship but also to seek out the best examples of antiquity which could be adapted to his uses. To this end he employed many well-known artists and craftsmen, as well as gaining access to famous collections such as that of the Duke of Marlborough. James Tassie, well known for his casts of antique gems, worked for him, also John Flaxman the famous sculptor, who, together with Henry Webber, spent some time in Rome supervising the making of reductions and adaptations from the antique for use at the factory. The wax modellers Mathew and Isaac Gosset are known to have worked on a series of contemporary celebrities known as the 'Illustrious Moderns', with William Hackwood, for many years principal modeller at the factory. Besides the work of professionals, some charming designs in relief of women and children are attributed to Lady Templetown, Lady Diana Beauclerke and a Miss Crewe. George Stubbs, the celebrated animal and portrait painter, who was a friend of Wedgwood's, also designed a number of relief medallions of equestrian subjects. Many

[5] See Wolf Mankowitz, *Wedgwood*, London, 1953, p. 108.

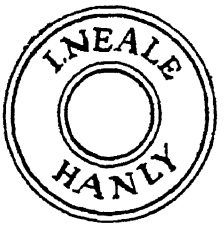
other names are known, but space forbids their inclusion here. All work was subject to Wedgwood's supervision, being altered or adapted at his discretion, and this, together with the fact that names of individual artists were rarely allowed to appear, sometimes makes personal attributions largely conjectural.

Thomas Bentley died in 1780 and in 1790 Wedgwood's three surviving sons, John, Josiah and Thomas and his nephew, Thomas Byerley, were taken into partnership. Within three years however Wedgwood senior, Josiah II and Byerley alone remained. In 1795 the founder himself died and Byerley in 1810.

It was inevitable that, as the creator of new materials and forms of ceramic expression, Wedgwood should have a host of followers. The Queensware was copied by most of the potters of his time, and even rivalled in quality, notably by that made at Leeds in Yorkshire; while the jaspers, besides inspiring local imitators such as William Adams, John Turner and Samuel Hollins, compelled even the great continental factories of Sèvres and Meissen to follow the English example.

The pottery industry from the Midlands to north of the Border was now well on the way to complete industrialization and therefore largely stereotyped in its products. The figures of John Walton, with their clumsy tree-stump supports and vivid green foliage, are obvious copies of Chelsea Derby porcelain, but a certain degree of originality is shown in the blue, green and orange palette of the so-called Pratt wares, while the firm of J. Neale & Co., later Neale & Wilson, made figures and table wares of good quality, often tastefully painted with bright enamel colours. Fresh inspiration was, however, lacking, and the nineteenth century produced no innovators capable of leading a new revival.

Fig. 6. Impressed on a scroll. Late eighteenth and early nineteenth century.



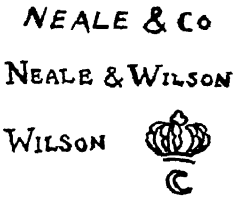


Fig. 7. The marks of Neale & Co. and Neale & Wilson. Late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. All impressed.

Porcelain

Unlike earthenware English porcelain had no roots in the national tradition. It was a new and untried medium with high costs and hazards of production that caused its makers to cater essentially for the tastes of the fashionable and monied classes rather than the humbler sections of the community.

The first porcelain seen in Europe was imported from China and was so highly prized that attempts were continually made to discover the secrets of its composition, the great distinction being its whiteness and translucency compared to the dense opacity of earthenware.

In the sixteenth and late seventeenth centuries soft paste or artificial bodies were achieved in Italy and France, but true porcelain in the Chinese sense was not made in Europe until Johann Friedrich Böttger, working at Meissen in 1709, discovered the secret of compounding china clay (kaolin) with china stone (petuntse). These, when fired at a high temperature, combine to form the hard vitrified material known as hard paste or true porcelain. This discovery, which was of immense financial value, was jealously guarded, Böttger being kept a virtual prisoner by Augustus the Strong, Elector of Saxony, under whose patronage the great German factory near Dresden was established in 1710.

In England no such discovery was forthcoming and, with the exception of that made by William Cookworthy at Plymouth 1768–70, and later by Champion of Bristol, who sold the patent to New Hall, all English porcelain was of the soft paste variety. In the foregoing circumstances it was

inevitable that Meissen, or Dresden china as it is better known, should become the model on which the first English styles were based, the majority being close imitations; though silver was also copied, particularly at Chelsea. Early English porcelain is, by reason of its paste, glaze and restrained decoration, of a quality equal to anything made elsewhere. It does not, however, come within the scope of this survey as by 1760 the baroque force of Meissen had given way to the rococo extravagances of the royal factory at Sèvres. Nowhere was this change more apparent than at the Chelsea factory, where the proprietor, Nicholas Sprimont, had inaugurated the final phase of production known, from the mark used, as the 'gold anchor' period (1758–70). Previously figures made in England had, like their German counterparts, been designed for use principally as table decorations and therefore could be viewed from any angle. Now, however, they had become popular as garnitures for mantelpieces and china cabinets, and the simple mound bases gave way to rococo scroll work mounted on feet, a design more suggestive of ormolu than porcelain. These bases were picked out in bright colours and gilding, while trees with branching foliage and flowers (bocage) often formed the background against which the figures were set, either singly, or as groups, the largest and most famous of the latter being the 'Music Lesson' (Pl. 45) taken from a painting by Boucher. Other groups of unusual size are a 'Roman Charity' and a pieta, while the best of the single figures include two finely

in blue, red or gold — incised — in blue

Fig. 8. Marks on Plymouth porcelain, 1768–70.

All in blue

Fig. 9. Marks on Bristol porcelain (Champion's factory), *c*, 1770–81.

1 2 3

Fig. 10. Marks used on Chelsea porcelain during the 'gold anchor' period, 1758–69. 1 and 2 are in gold. 3 is impressed and is the mark of a 'repairer' (one who moulds and assembles the model) and not that of Roubiliac the sculptor as is sometimes supposed.

modelled Harvesters (Pl. 46A), a set of Apollo and the Muses and another set known as the Ranelagh Masqueraders.

The diarist [6] Mrs Philip Lybbe Powys, who wrote during the years 1756 to 1808, and who gives a glimpse of the domestic activities of the upper classes of those days, does not fail to mention china collections. 'Lady Dashwood's china-room,' she observed after a visit in 1778 to Kirklington Park, 'is the most elegant I ever saw. 'Tis under the flight of stairs going into the garden; it's ornamented with the finest pieces of the oldest china, and the recesses and shelves painted pea-green and white, the edges being green in a mosaic pattern. Her Ladyship said she must try my judgement in china, as she ever did all the visitors of that closet, as there was one piece there so much superior to the others. I thought myself fortunate that a prodigious fine old Japan dish almost at once struck my eye.'

A larger and more splendid collection was at Blenheim. It delighted the Duchess of Northumberland when she saw it in 1752: 'We were also shown a little China Room, very prettily fitted up in w^ch is the China presented by the K. of Poland to the present Duke.' This china closet was not the one which the indefatigable Mrs Lybbe Powys saw at Blenheim in 1799: 'I went in the post-chaise to Blenheim, to see the new china-rooms. They are not in the house, but built just after you enter the park, four little rooms fill'd with all sorts of old china fix'd to the walls by three screws, one of which takes out to let them be removed, others are placed on pedestals or shelves. The whole has a pretty effect, but to

[6] Quoted in 'The China Case and China Closet', by R. W. Symonds – *The Connoisseur*, June 1952, p. 11.

others might be more amusing than to Lady Hardy and myself, as each of us has most of the same sort.' The Blenheim 'China Gallery' was fitted up in 1796, 'an additional attraction to the visitors of Blenheim, who delight in the antique, rich, and curious specimens of the porcelain, delf, and japan manufacture'.[7]

The ground colours of Sèvres were also imitated, such as the 'gros bleu' (called 'mazarine' blue), a rich claret (contemporarily 'crimson'), also green, turquoise and yellow. Typical examples of these ground colours are seen on the sets of elaborate rococo vases lavishly gilded and painted with figure subjects after Rubens, Boucher and Teniers. Chinoiseries in the style of Watteau and Pillement were also popular, together with birds, flowers and fruit. Famous among the vases is the claret-ground set of seven, once in the possession of Lord Dudley and now in Lord Bearsted's collection.[8] They are painted with mythological subjects and birds in the manner of Hondecoeter. The Huntington Art Gallery in California also possesses a fine pair and they are well represented in the British and Victoria and Albert Museums.

The table wares were no less magnificent in their ground colours and painting; a superb example is a tea and coffee service, the bequest of Emily Thompson, which may be seen at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Even more elaborate is the enormous equipage given in 1763 by George III and Queen Charlotte to the latter's brother, the Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz. It is mentioned by Horace Walpole as consisting of 'dishes, plates without number, an epergne, (Pl. 46B) candlesticks, salt-cellars, sauceboats and tea and coffee equipages costing £1,200'. He adds, however, 'I cannot boast of our taste; the forms are neither new, beautiful, nor various. Yet Sprimont the manufacturer is a Frenchman. It seems their taste will not bear transplanting.' This service, which is decorated with exotic birds and flowers within mazarine-blue and gilt borders, is now in the private collection of H.M. Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother; but a damaged pair of candelabra was sold by the steward of the Duke's household and is in the Schreiber collection at South Kensington. In the private collection of Her Majesty the Queen are two remarkable clocks with claret grounds, gilt scroll work and pastoral figures in the style of Boucher.

A charming feature of this period, although they were also made earlier, are the miniature objects known as 'Chelsea toys'. They are of a great variety, including tiny figures, in which seals were set, thimbles, étuis, scent-bottles, bonbonnières, etc. (Pl. 47A). These last were often mounted in gold, the bonbonnières having painted enamel lids. The scent-bottles were contained in shagreen cases and were often carried by ladies on coach journeys.[9] Chelsea toys almost invariably bear inscriptions in French which are, however, frequently misspelt.

In 1769 Sprimont sold the factory to James Cox who, in the following year, re-sold it to William Duesbury and John Heath of Derby. Duesbury continued for a number of years to use the premises, the productions of this period being known as Chelsea-Derby. They are in most cases somewhat insipid in character and not typical of the best of either factory. The table wares usually follow the style of decoration favoured by the neo-classical revival, while the figures are pale echoes of their predecessors. In 1784 the factory was finally closed and the moulds and workmen removed to Derby.

Although Bow ranks with Chelsea as the first

[7] It seems obvious that the above cannot refer to English porcelain. In the first paragraph Mrs Lybbe Powys is speaking of a visit to a porcelain-room which she made in 1778, and states that it is 'ornamented with the finest pieces of the oldest china': this could hardly apply to English porcelain made only twenty or thirty years previously, and the 'fine old Japan dish' was probably oriental. In the second paragraph the Duchess of Northumberland's visit to Blenheim was in 1752, and the 'K of Poland' was the Elector of Saxony, owner of the Meissen factory: it would seem, therefore, that whatever porcelain he gave to the Duke of Marlborough most likely came from that establishment. The 'delf' is presumably Delft, and would be tin-glazed earthenware, while that of 'Japan manufacture' would, again, be oriental.

[8] On loan to the Victoria and Albert Museum.

[9] See G. E. Bryant, *The Chelsea Porcelain Toys*, London, 1925.

in red | in blue or red | in blue | in blue | in red

Fig. 11. Marks found on Bow porcelain from 1760 onwards.

of the great factories very little of any consequence or originality was made there after 1760. The rococo style prevailed in the forms, which were similar to those of Chelsea, while much of the bright colouring was probably applied outside the factory. One of the owners, Wetherby, died in 1762, and his partner John Crowther went bankrupt in the following year. After this the history becomes obscure. Like Chelsea, it was probably financed by Duesbury and removed to Derby about 1775. A valuable contribution to the making of porcelain which originated at Bow was the use of bone ash in the paste. This made production less hazardous as it stabilized the body and helped to prevent collapsing in the kiln.

Of the early factories, Longton Hall closed in 1760, and only three, Worcester, Derby and Lowestoft, survived into the nineteenth century. The two former are still flourishing, but Lowestoft closed in 1802. This Suffolk factory could lay claim to few of the pretensions of its rivals. Its wares were for the most part of a utilitarian character and catered for a less opulent market. Many pieces bear scenes and inscriptions relating to the locality, typical examples being the well-known inkwells, mugs, etc., inscribed 'a Trifle from Lowestoft'. No recognized marks were used, and owing to the publication of a notorious mistake much Chinese export porcelain has been wrongly attributed to this source.

Worcester during its best period (1751–83) was under the direction of Dr Wall, the founder, and William Davis a partner and manager. The figures made there were negligible both in quantity and quality, but in the sphere of table wares, vases, etc., their work was unsurpassed.

One invention, which, although it did not originate at the factory, was more widely practised there than elsewhere, was transfer printing, chiefly in black, over the glaze. This method, of which Robert Hancock the engraver was the chief exponent, may be claimed as an original English contribution to ceramic art. It was used at Worcester from about 1757 onwards and forms an interesting group, mainly depicting the scenes and customs of the time. Armorial and commemorative pieces were also made, the best known of the latter being the signed and dated mugs with portraits of the King of Prussia (Pl. 48A). Chinoiseries in the manner of Pillement were another feature.

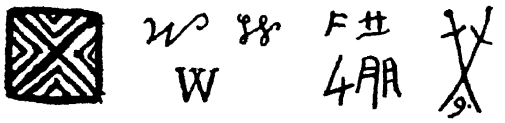
In 1769 there was a migration of workers from Chelsea to Worcester, after which the rich ground colours and gilding of the former factory predominated in the more ambitious productions. Coloured fish-scale grounds, ultimately derived from Meissen, were also a great feature, blue being the most usual. They are often seen in combination with exotic birds (the 'fantasie vögel' of Meissen) painted in panels (Pl. 48B). Oriental influences appear in the so-called 'Japan patterns' and various chinoiseries, the neo-classical style coming later.

A number of celebrated services were made, to which the name of distinguished patrons have been attached. One of the best known is supposed to have been made for William Henry, Duke of Gloucester. It is painted in the centre with large clusters of fruit within gilt and green borders intersected by compartments with sprays of fruit and insects.

The best known painters of Worcester porcelain are John Donaldson, the miniaturist, and Jeffrey Hamet O'Neale. Much outside decoration was also done in the London workshop of James Giles.

After the death of Dr Wall in 1776 and William Davis in 1783, various changes in ownership and partners caused the firm to come successively under the management of Thomas Flight, Flight and Barr, and Barr Flight & Barr, the last partnership ending in 1813. Robert Chamberlain, another member of the firm, having seceded in 1789, set up first as a decorator and later a manufacturer in opposition. The last phase is characterized by

1



in underglaze blue

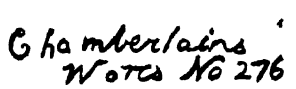
2

All in black

3

in underglaze blue | in red or blue | incised

in red | impressed



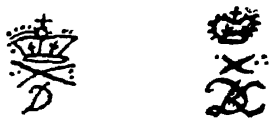
in red

Fig. 12. Marks on Worcester porcelain. 1 and 2 were used during the Dr Wall period, 1752–83. The pseudo-Oriental characters occur on pieces of the 'Japan patterns', about 1760–75, and the crossed swords are in imitation of Meissen; the number is sometimes 91. The fretted square is of Chinese origin. 2 shows the marks of Robert Hancock found on transfer printed pieces. The anchor is thought to be a rebus on the name of Richard Holdship, who was in charge of the printing department: it also occurs on pieces signed in full by Hancock. 3 shows the marks of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century.

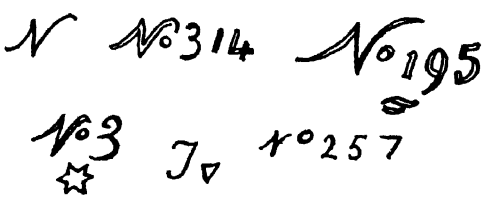
the somewhat pompous Empire style favoured in the early nineteenth century.

The great beauty attained in the early days at Derby was not fulfilled during the middle period. Many figures were made, some depicting contemporary notabilities; that of David Garrick in the character of King Richard III is a familiar example. This was modelled from an engraving by J. Dixon, published in 1772, after the painting by Nathaniel Dance, exhibited in the Royal Academy in 1771. In most instances, however, Meissen was once again the source of inspiration. The colours are generally bright, a dry turquoise blue which tended to discolour and become brown, being particularly characteristic. The Continental

1 in gold or red | 2 in gold | 3 in blue, puce or gold | 4 incised



5 in blue, puce or red | 6 in puce



7

All incised

Fig. 13. Derby factory marks. 1 is usual on Chelsea-Derby porcelain, 1770–84. 2 is about 1770–80. 3 is about 1780–4. 4 is incised on figures 1770–80. 5 is about 1784–1810, the red mark is late. 6 is the mark of Duesbury and Kean, about 1795. 7 shows marks incised on figures 1770–1800, they are the catalogue numbers of the model. The symbols are those of 'repairers'.

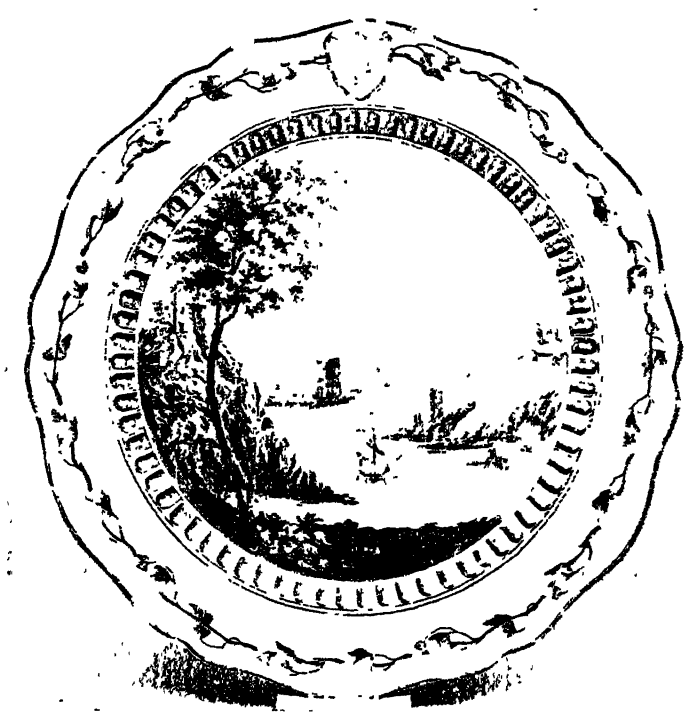
(A) A pair of figures of Turks, after models in Meissen porcelain by JOHANN JOACHIM KAENDLER. Salt-glazed stoneware, painted with enamel colours, *c.* 1760.
Victoria and Albert Museum.

(B) Coffee-pot, earthenware with mottled glaze ('tortoiseshell' ware). Staffordshire, *c.* 1760. Height 8½ in.
Victoria and Albert Museum.

(A) Delftware tiles of the eighteenth century, *c.* 1765, in polychrome with *bianco-sopra-bianco* border. *The Bristol City Art Gallery*

(B) Jug, modelled by JOHN VOYEZ, inscribed on the reverse side 'Fair Hebe', and signed and dated J Voyez, 1788. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*

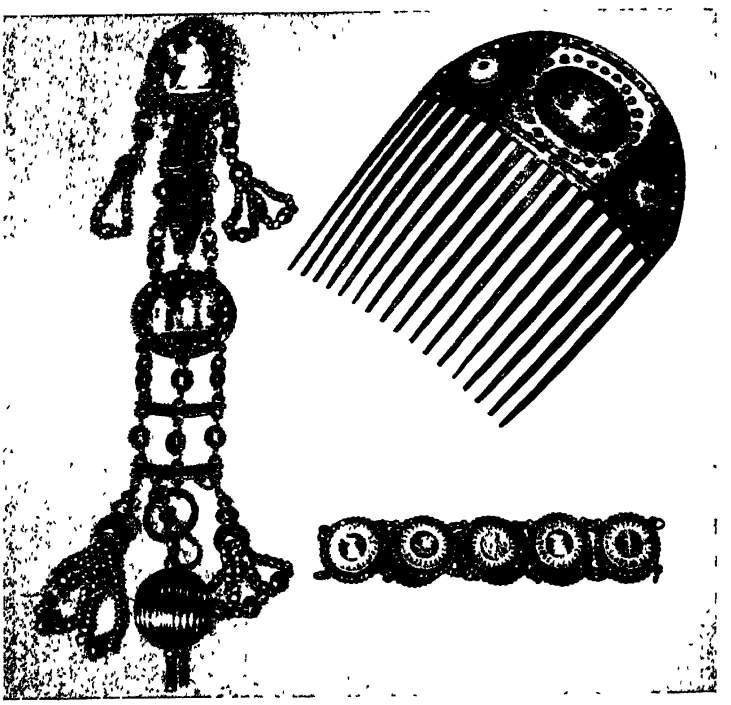
(C) 'Prince Hal' Toby jug by RALPH WOOD, Burslem, *c.* 1765. Height 14 in. *Lord Mackintosh of Halifax Collection.*



(A) A plate from the Empress Catherine of Russia Service, creamware painted in blackish purple monochrome, the crest in green Wedgwood. 1773–4 *Hanley Museum, Staffs*

(B) A plate with lilac pink border and gold edging. Painted in the centre with a spray of poppies by William 'Quaker' Pegg. These poppies are similar to a spray in Pegg's own sketch book, which has survived and is now in the Derby Museum. Mark, a crown with crossed batons and D. in blue. Derby, *c.* 1800. *G. W. Capell Collection.*

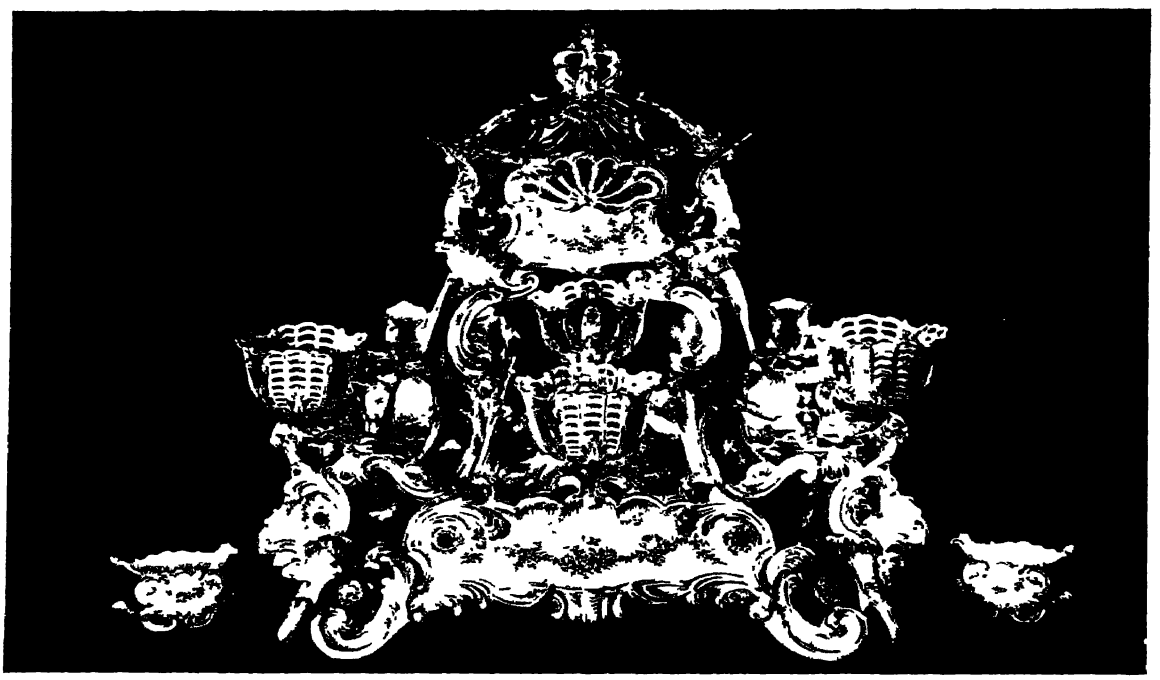
(A) Figure of Voltaire in black basaltes ware. Wedgwood, Etruria, *c.* 1777–80. *Victoria and Albert Museum*



(B) Chatelaine, comb and bracelet, coloured jasper ware mounted in cut-steel. Wedgwood, Etruria, *c.*1786–90. *Josiah Wedgwood and Sons Ltd.*

'The Music Lesson', adapted from a painting by François Boucher, entitled 'L'Agréable Leçon', porcelain painted in colours. Mark, an anchor in gold and 'R' impressed. Chelsea, *c.* 1765. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*

(A) Pair of Chelsea figures, 'The Harvesters'. Height 10 in., mark, an anchor in gold, 1758–60. *Mrs H. Synge-Hutchinson Collection*



(B) The épergne from the service given by King George III and Queen Charlotte to the Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz. 'Mazarine'-blue ground covered with insects in gold, enclosing panels painted with festoons of flowers. Mark, anchor in gold, Chelsea. *c.* 1763. *By gracious permission of H.M. Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.*

PLATE 46

(A) Bonbonnèries and scent bottles Chelsea porcelain, *c.* 1755–65. *Victoria and Albert Museum*

(B) Three grouped pieces, representing the Royal Family, after a painting by Zoffany, unglazed porcelain (biscuit), Derby, *c.* 1771. *By gracious permission of H.M. The Queen.*

(A) A mug, transfer printed in black with a full length of Frederick the Great, and a battle scene in the background. On the reverse is a large trophy of arms and flags. Signed R. H. Worcester and dated. Worcester, *c.* 1757. *G. W. Capell Collection.*

(B) Vase and cover, with scale-blue ground and large shaped panels painted with exotic birds among trees and bushes Mark, a fretted square in blue, Worcester, *c.* 1770. *Victoria and Albert Museum*

influence is further seen in a class of white, unglazed biscuit groups intended to imitate marble, which were a speciality of the factory. One of the first and most important works in this medium is grouped as three figures representing the Royal Family after a painting by Zoffany (Pl. 47B). The only complete set known is in the possession of Her Majesty the Queen. Some of the later models are by J. J. Spengler, son of the director of the Zurich Porcelain factory, who was at Derby from 1790–5.

Decoration on the later table wares, vases, etc., was of a very high standard and many talented artists were at work. Zachariah Boreman painted landscapes, James Banford and John and Robert Brewer figures, landscapes and other subjects, while the naturalistic flowers of William Billingsley and William Pegg (Pl. 43B) are notable, as are the pink monochromes in the Sèvres style by Richard Askew, and the birds of Complin. Others were Fidèle Duvivier, Lawton and Hill.

William Duesbury died in 1786 and was succeeded by his son of the same name, who, in 1795 took a miniature painter, Michael Kean, into partnership. The second Duesbury died in the following year and Kean carried on the factory until 1811.

Outside the larger establishments porcelain was also being made at Coalport in Shropshire and Pinxton in Derbyshire, as well as at Liverpool. But by the end of the eighteenth century the greater part of the industry was concentrated in Staffordshire, the chief makers being New Hall, Spode, Minton, Davenport and Ridgeway. Josiah Spode had introduced the bone porcelain which henceforth became the standard English body, and everywhere the advance of industrialization brought with it a degree of similarity that makes individual descriptions largely superfluous.

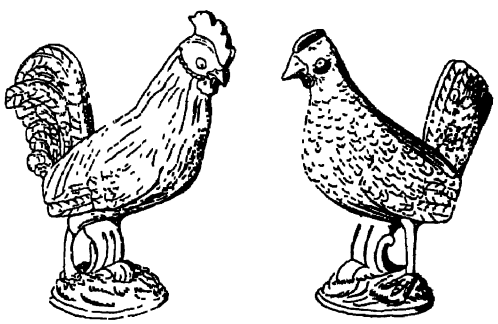


Fig. 14. Staffordshire pottery cock and hen, late eighteenth century. $8\frac{1}{4}$" and $7\frac{3}{4}$". *Schreiber Collection in Victoria and Albert Museum.*

Domestic Metalwork

Domestic Metalwork

G. BERNARD HUGHES

Late Georgians took a lively pleasure in the metalwork that graced their homes. Never had its quality been so fine nor lent itself to such varied treatment; never had there been such a range of wares to ensure the requisite air of elegance, and never again, perhaps, would there be such a solid basis of traditional good craftsmanship to ensure lastingly beautiful, satisfying design and execution.

Sheffield plate brought, to more modest homes, much of the gracious loveliness of silver; brass shone with a newly-won golden brilliance; heart-warming copper wares enriched living rooms as well as kitchen quarters, but were rivalled by the rainbow brilliance of japanned iron. The cool sheen of burnished steel was never more perfectly displayed, and the fading beauties of pewter were superseded in the home by the tougher, more lastingly clear-toned Britannia metal. And behind every one of these developments, as behind many other associated refinements, was an English invention.

Sheffield plate had been invented by Thomas Bolsover in 1742. It was an inestimable boon to the less-than-wealthy home: almost everything made in silver was repeated in what, until about 1770, was known as copper rolled plate. Sheffield plate domestic ware dates no earlier than 1758 when Joseph Hancock established the trade in Sheffield, having devised the lapped edge which hid the streak of copper beneath the silver that had declared itself wherever a cut edge was visible. By the early 1760's his range of domestic hollow-ware was considerable, all heavily lined with tin until the invention of double-sided plate in the early 1770's.

Chronology of Sheffield plate

Edgings and mounts on pieces of Sheffield plate display a chronology of improvements by which late Georgian examples may be grouped into six classes. These are: (1) single lapped edge, 1758–80; (2) double lapped copper mounts, 1768–early nineteenth century; (3) silver lapped mounts, 1775–1815; (4) solid silver mounts, 1780–1830; (5) drawn silver wire mounts, 1785–1820; (6) silver stamped mounts from the early 1790's. Much of the work was hand-raised but stamped lids and spouts were introduced in the 1780's, and flat and plain work was shaped by stamping from the early 1790's; the spinning of hollow-ware dates from the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Domestic table ware in production by 1790 might be listed to the number of one hundred and fifty different articles, some of which, such as candlesticks and cruets, were issued in hundreds of different patterns. Dinner and dessert services were selling at the factory for from fifty to three hundred guineas and breakfast sets for as much as two hundred guineas. At this time Sheffield plate was selling at about one-third the price of silver plate, which from 1782 was taxed to the extent of sixpence an ounce.

Proof of success was the devastating effect on the craft of silversmithing despite efforts at price-cutting factory methods. In 1797 the Goldsmiths' Company, on behalf of the Birmingham

silversmiths, petitioned the government complaining that 'plated ware manufacturers have produced articles of the highest elegance and fashion, many of which are now made with solid silver borders, shields, ornaments, finished in exact resemblance of real plate'. A request was made that an excise duty of threepence an ounce should be placed on plated ware and that platers should be compelled to strike name or initials and the word 'plated' on each piece. It had been optional since 1784 to strike these, together with a registered trade mark or device. The plate varied in quality, ten to twelve ounces of sterling silver to eight pounds of copper being the standard proportions. When deep-cut engraving was required the thickness of the silver was doubled.

Candlesticks and candelabra

Candles of wax and tallow were still the most usual source of domestic illumination when George III was crowned. Chandeliers of brass and latten had been replaced for the most part by gilded wood and glass lustres. With these, in drawing- and dining-rooms, appeared shapely Sheffield plate table candlesticks and candelabra, their bold designs rendered adequately stable by fillings of melted resin and sand.

The classic ornament that swept through English industrial design during the 1760's revolutionized candlestick styles. Traditional baluster forms were outmoded by shouldered stems with vertical outlines. In Sheffield plate the stem was usually circular, tapering towards a round foot. Until the late 1770's it was without ornament: then stem and socket might be gadrooned and the lower stem fluted. The four-sided shouldered stem was also made, tapering to a square foot. There were architectural columns too, until the 1780's, capital and base usually matching their order. Less costly were the cylindrical stems, with trumpet-shaped feet at first and with square feet from about 1790. The variety of candlestick designs is beyond computation, but they follow definite fashion styles.

Branches were fitted to Sheffield plate candlesticks from the 1760's: from about 1780 it was customary for these to twist around a central finial rising from the pillar. To strengthen them and to assist stability, their arms were filled with soft solder.

Brass candlesticks were made in ever-increasing numbers during this period, price reductions and increased prosperity taking them into new homes. A new process applied to casting made it possible for stem and socket to be made in a single hollow piece, thus obviating the disfiguring hair-line marks of the vertical joins (Pl. 50A). The foot was cast separately and attached.

The major feature of brass history of this period, however, was the new brass composed of copper and zinc patented by James Emerson in 1770. This brass was described by R. Watson in *Chemical Essays*, 1786, as being 'more malleable, more beautiful, and of a colour more resembling gold than brass containing calamine'. It produced clear-cut modelling of a quality formerly attainable only by the costly use of princes metal and pinchbecks and the surface was rarely disfigured by pitting. The demand for table candlesticks in the new brass became enormous and by 1780 was responsible for the establishment of a new specialist trade.

Brass candlesticks of the early 1760's were for the most part square-footed with plain edges; moulded edges appeared by 1765 and the now rare gadrooned edge by 1770. Stems varied between the plain, attenuated baluster rising from one or two knops, and the plain or fluted column rising from the flat platform of a stepped plinth. From about 1780 to the end of the period the most popular stem was in the form of an elongated cone, round or square in section, and generally fluted, with a high pyramid or domed foot. The telescopic candlestick, found also in Sheffield plate, was patented in 1796 and had a considerable vogue.

Numerous other domestic accessories were cast in Emerson's brass and double gilded, such as pastille burners, girandoles, inkstands, paperweights, thermometer stands, watch stands, busts and figures of animals.

Crusie lamps in brass and copper

Open-flame crusie lamps in brass or copper plate came into widespread use from the early

1760's and continued into the Regency period. Such lamps might hang as chandeliers; others were table lamps, the design usually including a hollow stem rising from a spreading foot, pedestal and foot being weighted with sand.

Improvements in oil refining, wick manufacture and lamp designing at this time increased efficiency and resulted in almost smokeless and non-odorous illumination. For the first time the cylindrical reservoir was provided with a hinged lid, the straight tubular burner was fully enclosed, and oil dripping was prevented. Each burner – there might be as many as thirty – gave a yellowish flame equal to about two ordinary modern candles.

The Argand lamp in Sheffield plate and in brass appeared on the domestic scene in the 1780's, burning a tubular wick that provided an air passage in a ring flame which was made steady by a glass chimney. James Watt, the English licencee of the Argand lamp, recorded that 'they gave a light surpassing in steadiness anything known hitherto'. Liverpool lamps, also in Sheffield plate and brass, were evolved in about 1800. The principle was the same, but an adjustable disc set above the wick increased illumination by expanding the flame, the lower part of the chimney therefore being made globular. By about 1800 oil lamps were made for suspending from the ceiling and from wall brackets, catalogues referring to them in Grecian and Etruscan designs.

Emerson's brass rolled into sheet was shaped into domestic hollow-ware by stamping, a process patented in 1769 by Richard Ford of Birmingham. Compared with hand-raising this lessened the weight of metal required by more than two-thirds, with labour comparably reduced. Kitchenware was the chief production until 1780 when stamped brasswork, gilded and lacquered, was made for interior decoration. This included mouldings for wall panelling, sconces, and looking-glass frames. In 1783 Gee and Eginton advertised 'gilt metal or burnished gold frames, borderings and ornaments for rooms in stamped gilt metal'. The Birmingham firm of Yates, Hamper and Company issued a pattern book illustrating such ornament of the 1790's and examples inspected by Aitkin in 1862 were reported as showing 'that sharp, shallow dies were used and so richly were they gilt that they pass with very good judges for burnished gold'.

Heyday of copper wares

Copper domestic ware continued to be made as formerly. The town coppersmith could show burnished coffee pots with ebony-stained boxwood handles; saucepans of all sizes with uprising handles in hardwood, often the yellow sapwood of *lignum vitae*; slow-burning charcoal braziers for warming foods; ladles and perforated skimmers; chestnut roasters; coach, foot and stomach warmers; cheese toasters; egg poachers and coddlers; wine strainers; flour and pepper boxes; wash-hand basins and jugs; knife, spoon and cheese trays; card racks, and a hundred other articles of domestic use. Frying-pans were made in great quantities, the half-hoop handle fitted with a swivel eye for hanging from a pot-hook. Ale warmers were in common use, the early form in the shape of a boot now superseded by the conical type for pushing down vertically into the heart of a grate fire.

Hollow-ware intended to contain food or water had to be tinned inside to combat poisoning hazards associated with copper and brass. Retinning was needed very frequently until 1774 when John Bootie patented the long-wearing method of tinning with hot sal-ammoniac and pure molten tin. Even this was far from permanent.

The stamp was brought into use for shallow, light-weight hollow-ware such as warming-pans, plate covers and ladles. Curves were now introduced into warming-pan design and from 1780 handles were usually black japanned. The Earl of Carlisle's household papers show that a copper warming-pan cost him fourteen shillings in 1741 but in 1780 only three shillings and tenpence. By 1780 the wooden handle might be made to unscrew from its socket, enabling the pan to remain fully enclosed by the bedclothes. The hot-water warming-pan, at first in pewter, gradually superseded the charcoal-heated variety from the 1770's and, according to Edward Thomason, a maker

of warming-pans, few of the charcoal-heated type were sold after about 1810. The hot-water warming-pan had a brass cap in the centre for filling (Pl. 51B).

Bottle roasting jacks operating by clockwork mechanism of brass within cases of brass or copper date from the 1760's onwards, and within twenty years their manufacture had become a considerable trade. John Linwood, in the late 1790's, made mechanical improvements that enabled them to twist and untwist for from two to four hours according to the weight of the load. Such a roasting jack was suspended from a jack-rack clamped to the extending centre of the mantelshelf, or hung within the tall, niche-shaped enclosure of tinned sheet iron known as a Dutch oven. This measured about five feet in height and enabled roasting to be done in front of a coal-fire grate. Its curved sides and top reflected heat upon the rotating joint from which fat and gravy fell into a deep pan below.

Urns for tea and coffee

Tea and coffee urns came into use early in the 1760's, silver styles quickly being reflected in Sheffield plate, copper and japanned iron. They were evolved from the 'tea fountain', a hot-water kettle with a tap fitted immediately above the kettle's flat base, a type that continued throughout the period.

The first tea urns contained a quart and were heated with charcoal. In this design the vessel could be lifted from its stem, which supported a perforated cylinder containing burning charcoal. These were outmoded by 1774 when John Wadham patented an urn in which heat was maintained by a cylindrical box iron. This was made red-hot in the kitchen fire and inserted into a close-fitting heater case, rising centrally from the base within the urn so that the water circulated around it. This type of heater became widespread after expiration of the patent in 1788. At about this time some urns were heated with spirit lamps, these vessels tending to be of fine quality for the smokeless spirits of wine was a costly fuel. Mortar candles might also be used from the late 1790's

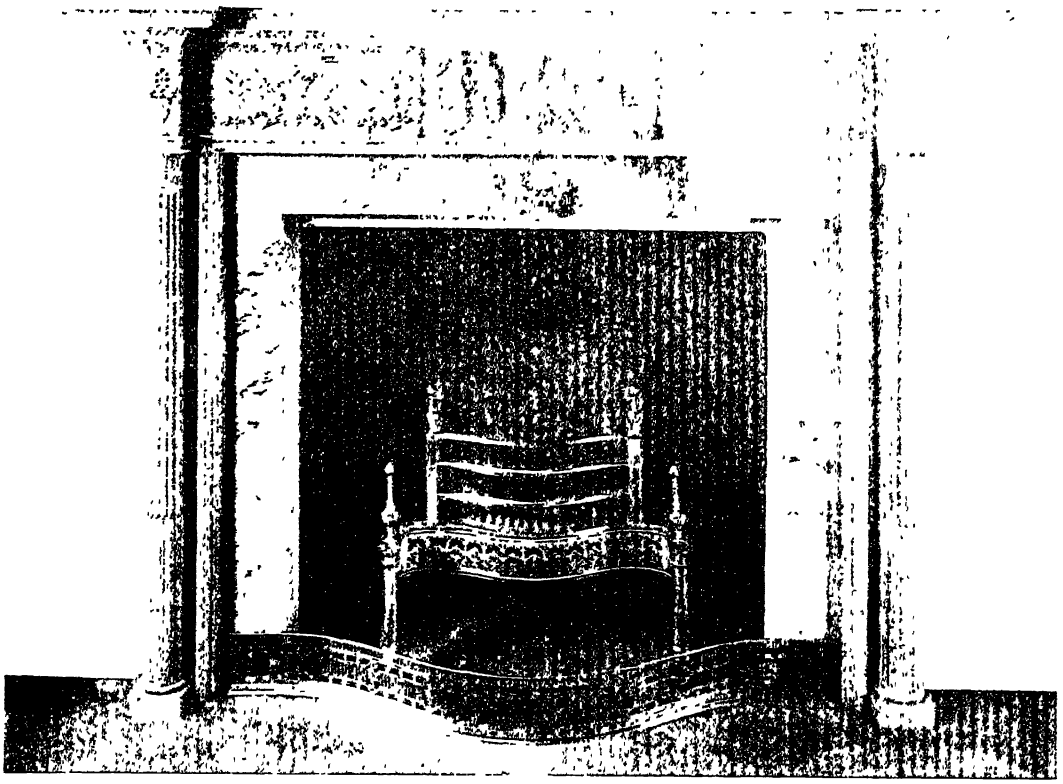
Three standard sizes of urn were in regular production in the eighteenth century – quart, three pints and gallon. Giant urns of five to eight quarts date from about 1805. Late Georgian hardware catalogues illustrated them indiscriminately as tea and coffee urns, with the exception of three-pint sizes which were almost invariably captioned as 'Coffee Urn to hold 3 pints' (Pl. 51C).

The dating of japanned wares

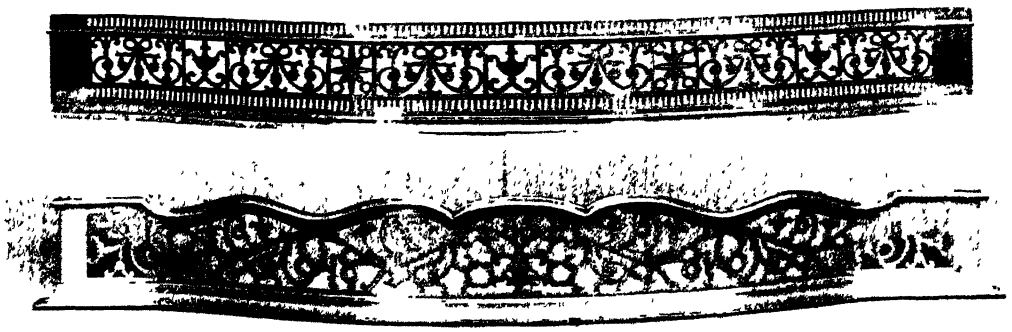
Colourful japanned urns and other articles contributed a delightful radiance to late Georgian homes. Vermilion, rich green, chocolate, yellow, tortoiseshell or black formed the background to pictures of considerable merit painted by clever artists and efficient but less persuasive work by capable artisan copyists. Japanned iron took on a new brilliance in the 1760's when new japanning factories opened at Wolverhampton, Birmingham and elsewhere, striving their utmost to emulate Pontypool japan ware, even to the extent of naming their productions 'Pontipool japan'. The scope was wide and included urns, kettles and smokers' brazier sets, chestnut servers, cheese cradles, toilet boxes, coasters, tea canisters, letter racks, trays and waiters (Pl. 51).

Oriental figures and landscapes in shaded gold formed the predominant type of decoration until the mid-1760's when colour was introduced to the gold, creating rich effects. Large areas might be painted with landscapes or architectural designs, such an article as a tray being covered to the edge of the rim. Flower painting dates from about 1780 with flowers and foliage in dull bronze shades. By the 1800's there was a vogue for huge chrysanthemums or asters: stalks were in gold and leaves in shades of yellow. In early work as many as fifteen stovings were given to background colours, the final coating remaining in the oven for between three and four weeks.

A japanned tea-tray, known as a 'hand tea table' was used for the tea equipage, being set out with a tea urn and porcelain. At first it was square or oblong with corners folded and riveted; by 1770 corners were cut and brazed; and from the 1790's hammered turn-over rims were frequent. A circular or oval tray hammered from thinly

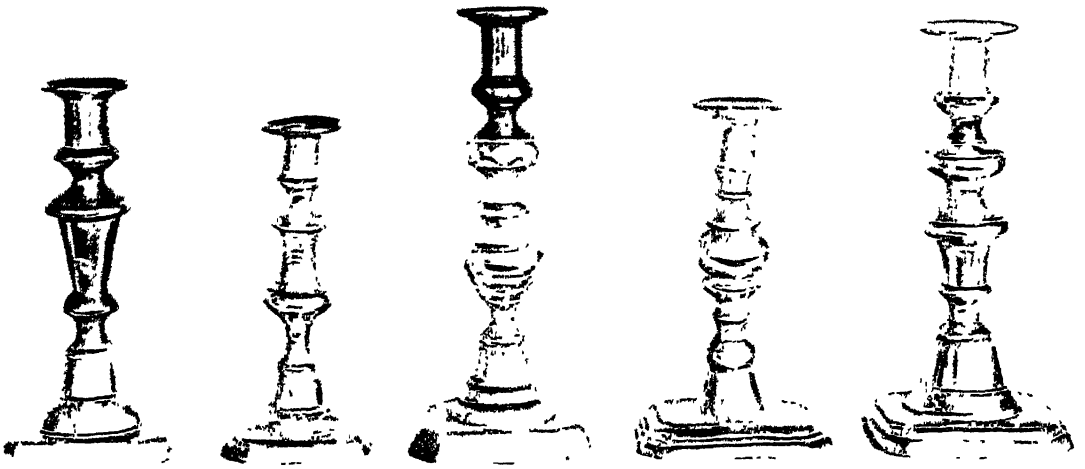


(A) Adam pine column mantelpiece with applied enrichment in lead composition. Steel grate with pierced apron, and pierced fender. *Mallett and Son Ltd.*



(B) Pierced and engraved fenders of the late eighteenth century: (*top*) in 'tutenag' (base metal alloy, whitish in colour); (*below*) in steel. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*

PLATE 49

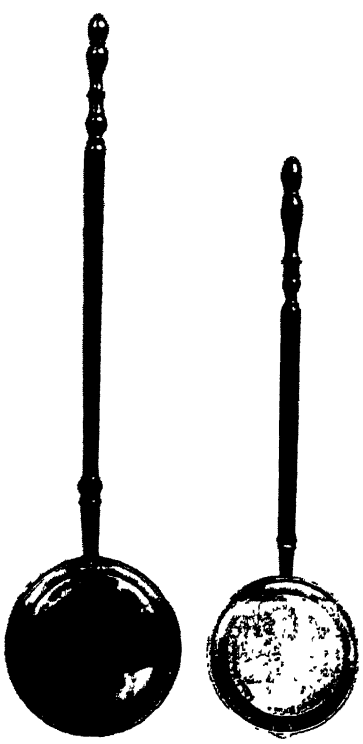


A Brass candlesticks in which socket and stem were cast in a single hollow piece and attached to square hollow foot. Fashionable during late eighteenth century but made in a wide variety of stem patterns until mid-nineteenth century. *Victoria and Albert Museum*

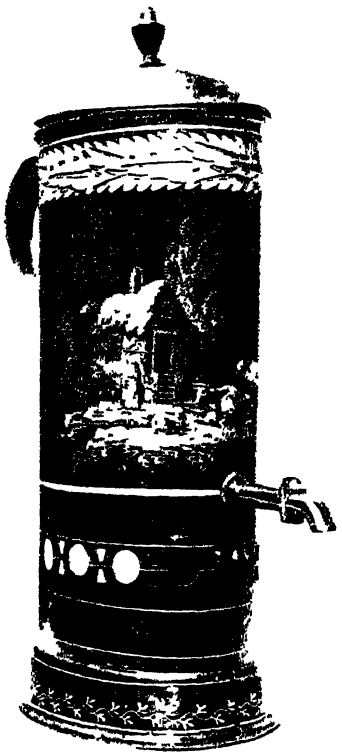
(B) Hand-forged steel knives and forks, silver mounted handles: 1st, green stained ivory, 2nd, South Staffordshire enamel, 4th, stamped Sheffield silver (all late eighteenth century); 3rd, late seventeenth century, engraved ivory inlaid with silver. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*

PLATE 50

(A) Japanned tray with hand grips, painted with an all-over sporting scene, *c.* 1800. *A. E. Bastien, Esq.*

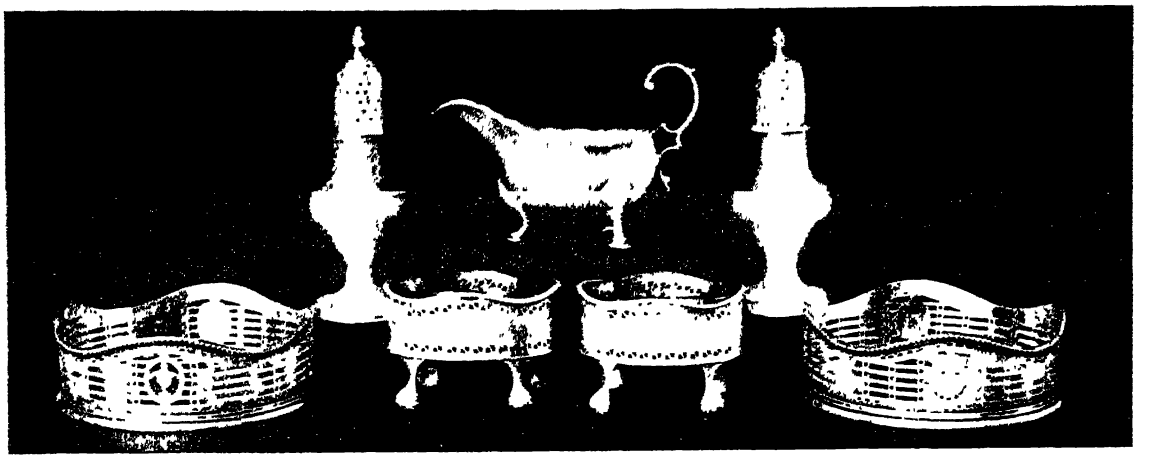


(B) Copper warming pans with stamped ember pans and lids, cast brass ferrules, handles of japanned beechwood. Late eighteenth century. *Author's Collection.*

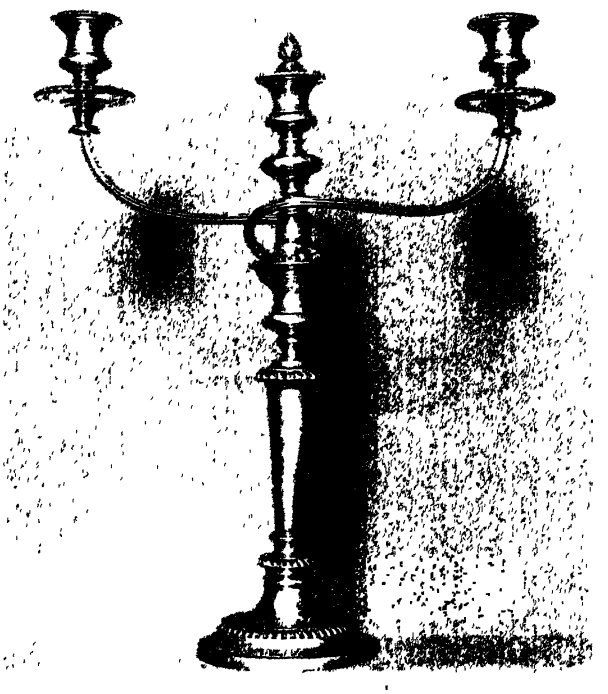


(C) Coffee urn in Pontypool japan, decorated with rustic landscape with figures and sheep, by Thomas Barker. *National Museum of Wales.*

PLATE 51

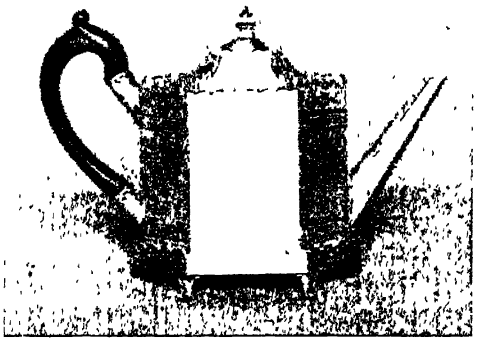


(A) A group of late Georgian Sheffield plate showing a pair of muffineers and a cream boat, a pair of pierced wine coasters, and a pair of salt cellars with blue glass liners. *Private Collection.*



(B) Two-branch candelabrum with branches twisting around the central finial which is removable so that a third light may be used. About 1800. *Private Collection.*

(C) Pewter tankard showing the bulbous body, massive recurved handle and perforated thumbpiece of the late Georgian period. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*



(D) Teapot and stand of Vickers white metal, designed and engraved in the style of contemporary silver. Marked beneath I. Vickers. Late 1780s. *Private Collection.*

PLATE 52

rolled plate – tinned for fine work – might be encircled with a border of pierced pales, and narrow handle holes might be cut.

Pewter and its rivals

The introduction of liquid lead glaze on ceramics immensely widened the scope of enamelled earthenwares in the average home, as it did the porcelains of the wealthy, and one obvious result was a drastic reduction in demand for the pewterer's domestic ware. Candlesticks in shapes resembling those of brass continued to be made, however, along with a variety of kitchen ware such as salt cellars, casters, jugs, tea canisters, the newly-invented hot-water dishes, and so on.

Highly ornamental desserts of lavish proportions were fashionable at this period and pewterers were called upon to make capacious jelly and blancmange moulds designed to open piece by piece, so that undercut effects such as piles of luscious fruits could be removed without damage. In another design the top and base of the mould might be separate from the main section which was delicately fluted within.

Pewter had other competitors too. A soft tin alloy, so closely resembling silver in appearance that the casual observer would never differentiate between the two, was introduced in 1769 by John Vickers of Sheffield. In the 1780's he was advertising such domestic ware as teapots, sugar basins, cream jugs, beakers, tobacco boxes, caster frames, all following Sheffield plate designs in 'Vickers' White Ware' (Pl. 52D).

Pewter met with additional, and this time deadly, competition in the early 1790's when John Vickers introduced Britannia metal, an alloy of tin, antimony, copper and bismuth, rolled into plate or cast. Its toughness made it a distinct advance on pewter. When polished, this silvery-white metal, faintly tinged with blue, became highly lustrous and greatly enhanced the tables of those who could afford neither silver nor Sheffield plate. Standard quality Britannia metal, if struck with a wooden rod, emits a clear, ringing tone, similar to that of X-crown pewter.

Britannia metal domestic ware until about 1805 was made only in small sizes, constructed from hand-raised and stamped units. Early in the nineteenth century, however, hollow-ware was spun, and cast decoration might be added. Such ware was lighter in weight than pewter of comparable size. Earthenware and stoneware drinking vessels were made with Britannia metal rims and hinged lids. Spoons and ladles were cast and burnished.

The considerable mid-Georgian trade in tin plate domestic ware continued into the period under review. Table ware included heavily tinned and burnished venison dishes, salmon dishes, soup tureens and vegetable dishes, between the invention of the process of tinning and the development of Sheffield plate. Dish covers and teapots were hammer-shaped, but the seams prevented attractive outlines.

Iron 'kitchen furniture'

Iron plate could be shaped into pots, kettles and saucepans at this period for about one-third the cost of copper, but they were cumbersome objects until the 1760's when carbon iron made possible scale-free plate more suitable for tinning. The Cort patents of 1784 so vastly improved the puddling and rolling processes that almost every article of domestic ware could be made in tinned iron plate. Output soared: in 1788 there were 77 blast furnaces operating in England; by 1806 there were 222. Domestic ware continued to be hand-made for iron plate could not yet withstand the stamp without splitting: a patty-pan, for instance, consisted of several pieces of tin plate brazed or soldered together.

Domestic hollow-ware, catalogued as 'kitchen furniture', in long-wearing, light-weight tinned cast iron dates from 1779 when Jonathan Taylor, a workman at the Eagle Foundry, Birmingham, patented a method of casting oval-bellied and round cast iron pots 'nealing, turning, tinning and finishing the same'. These were attractive in appearance and much cheaper than hand-wrought plate, brass or copper. At first black lead was used as an outside coating: this was replaced by stove-dried varnish from about 1800. At about the same time umbrella stands, door-porters, door-knockers, shoe-scrapers, smoothing-irons, latches and handles were cast by the same process.

Malleable cast iron, in which small objects for the home could be sold at less than one-third the cost of wrought iron, was invented in 1804 by Samuel Lucas of Sheffield. Handles and latches made of malleable cast iron were, for their purpose, quite as strong as those of wrought iron.

Burnished steel around the fire

The focal point of a fashionably furnished room was the fireplate equipped with a portable grate, fender and fire-irons in burnished steel. John Byng in *The Torrington Diaries*, 1791, recorded that 'in summer the grates and fenders are polished up, the tongs, shovel and poker laid up for the summer'. He also observed that when a fire was lighted the brilliancy of the grate was spoiled. Architects designed mantelpiece, grate and fender; the pierced motifs in the steel were repeated in the carving (Pl. 49).

The pierced steel fender, bowed and often with an undulating upper edge, was costly but gave unlimited wear. The hand-sawn pierced design extended from end to end in a single over-all pattern composed of birds, animals, flowers, foliage and scrollwork, surface chased in a manner resembling ornament on silver, and edged with narrow wrought moulding. This style, continuing from early Georgian days, was followed by alternating classic motifs such as the anthemion and star, or urn and rosette, the upper edge bordered with a low, vertical fret-cut rim of repetitive motifs. The same theme might be repeated on the apron of the grate.

These were followed in the 1790's by press-cut steel in thinner gauge, factory made in short panels, wide and narrow, bordered top and bottom with narrow bands of vertical piercings. Many of these were made at Kirkstall Forge, Leeds, where there was an extensive mill for grinding and polishing steel units. Other pierced ornaments consisted of a central band of convex medallions enriched with bright cutting, with pierced backgrounds and borders, the top and bottom edges being strengthened with rows of beading. A panel displaying a large version of the predominating motif might be riveted in the centre. Complex trellis work is also found. Fenders in all these styles were made of latten or battery brass sheet, too, and late in the period the grate and fender might be of heavily cast and chased brass.

Tongs, shovel and poker were made of burnished iron. At first handle ornament was wrought in the solid metal, but improvements in the quality of iron during the 1780's made it possible to do this by lapping, that is, by turning a piece of hot iron around the heated rod wherever a knop was required. The twisted shank dates from the 1790's, shaped by tools or hand-twisted. The shovels were cut from sheet iron.

Wolverhampton locks

Door locks in the main followed the early Georgian styles with Wolverhampton still leading the way. When George III equipped the Queen's House, now Buckingham Palace, he specified that every state-room lock should be made in Wolverhampton. A new style in mortice lock furniture for fitting into solid mahogany doors was sponsored in the mid-1760's by Robert Adam. Such a lock, which cost twelve guineas, consisted of an expansive back plate of chased and gilt cast brass, in scrollwork designs symmetrically arranged with festoons of husks, centring on the door knob and flanked with a keyhole escutcheon and a matching dummy escutcheon, or a small knob for operating a night bolt.

Lock cases stamped from rolled brass, weighing less than a third of the earlier hand-made type, date from the late 1770's. They were cast too in Emerson's brass with plain, square or moulded edges and surfaces were virtually unflawed by pitting. Brass locks continued to be finely engraved, and intricate damascening was revived from the seventeenth century.

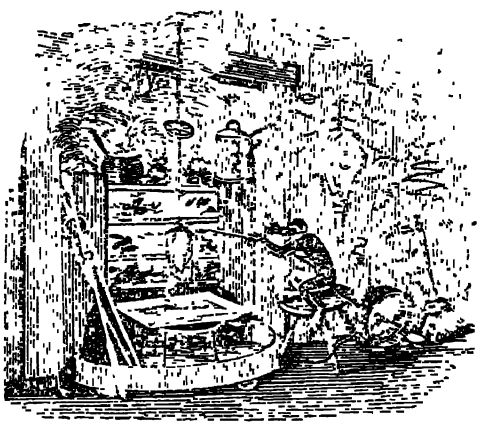
Security emphasis was laid upon wards which had now become highly complicated, but were still not proof against skeleton keys. Robert Barron patented in 1778 a system of fixed wards in combination with levers. Only its own specially made key would open such a lock which within a few years had achieved world-wide renown. Joseph Bramah invented the first door lock with a small key in 1784, operating, not on a sliding bolt but through the medium of a rotating barrel –

thus anticipating Yale's cylindrical lock of 1848. The first cheap locks were made in 1796 when Isaac Mason of Willenhall first cut the cases from sheet iron and punched and bolstered them by the fly press.

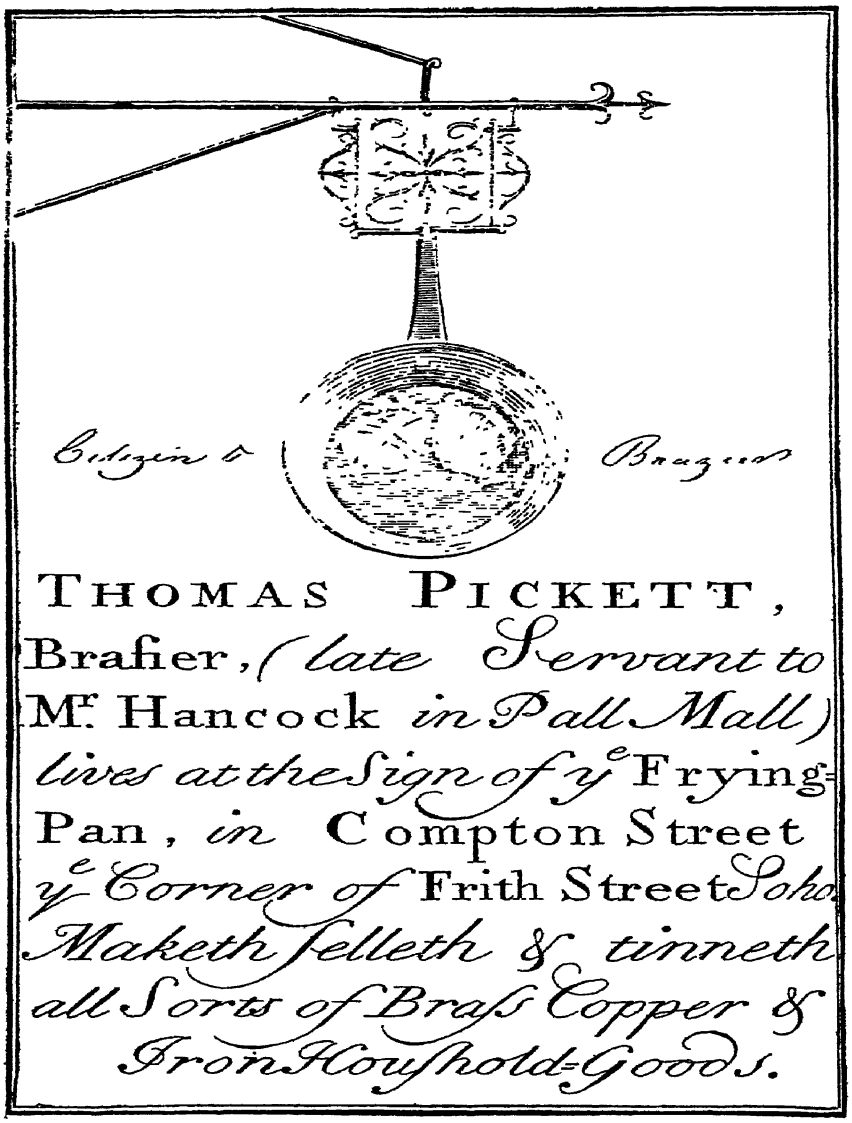
Ornament in lead

Lead found a new purpose in the home during the late eighteenth century when interior decorators took it into use for making relief figure panels, garlands, vases and frets which were double gilt, or painted after washing eight times with 'gum lac, parchment and red lead'. The Somerset House accounts for 1780 record many payments for decorations of this nature such as lead pateras 2½*d.* to 10*d.* each; 19 ornamental friezes to chimney pieces £10 17*s.* 8*d.*; lead frieze to book cases, 2*s.* 6*d.* per foot. In 1778 John Cheere, lead figure maker, submitted a bill for 'moulding, casting and finishing four large sphinxes, lead and block tin, at each, £31'. Lead figure making was an established craft of the period. Soft pure lead was used hardened by a process invented by William Storer in 1770 by which 'all sorts of girandoles, frames for pier glasses, tablets, friezes and brackets for chimney pieces and rooms could be chased to the full relief of the boldest and richest carving in wood'.

Front door fanlights were filled with gracefully designed windows outlined with lead castings made sturdy with a backing of iron. Staircase balustrades might also be cast in panels of hard lead lattice work fixed between iron standards a yard or more apart. To the late Georgian even homely lead was an artistic medium, confined within the limited scope of permissible neoclassic design, but playing its gracious part in an age that expected its metalwork to contribute ornamental refinement as well as enduring service to the elegant home.



Tail-piece from T. Bewick's *A History of British Birds*, Vol. 2, 1804.



Engraved tradesman's card of the late eighteenth century. From Sir Ambrose Heal's *London Tradesmen's Cards of the Eighteenth Century*, 1925.

Textiles

Textiles

DONALD KING

In the overall effect of the late Georgian interior, the patterns of textiles played a less dominant role than they had done in earlier periods. This is not to say that the domestic use of textiles diminished or underwent any fundamental change. Textiles retained their practical and decorative value as coverings for floors, chairs, settees, cushions, tables and beds, and as hangings for beds, windows and walls. Quantitatively, the textile furnishings of a fashionable room tended to increase rather than decrease, so that at the end of the eighteenth century interiors such as those of Carlton House were muffled and shrouded in a plethora of draperies, curtains, festoons and fringes. But the taste of the age inclined mainly to plain, unpatterned stuffs, or to materials having designs in a single colour or discreetly powdered with small polychrome motifs. Moreover, it was to the advantage of the artist-decorator, who achieved a new prominence in this period, to exclude from his schemes strongly patterned textiles of variegated colour, in order that the subtlety of his own arrangements of line and form, colour and texture, might be the more apparent. As a result, the more boldly patterned woven stuffs tended to disappear, while tapestry and embroidery, techniques particularly adapted to large-scale polychrome designs, lost their former importance. Only carpet-design retained a bold scale, since the interior decorators found that it could be used to re-echo at floor level the design of the plasterwork of ceilings.

Woven textiles

Besides the non-textile material, leather, which was extensively used for upholstery, a very large proportion of the woven textiles used in the interior decoration of English houses consisted of plain, unpatterned stuffs. The sheen of satin was much appreciated, and white, cream and other pale-coloured satins were used in great quantities. Lady Mary Coke, visiting Lord Bute's house in 1774, gives a characteristic view of an interior in the contemporary style, when she writes that almost all the rooms were hung with light green plain papers, showing the pictures to great advantage, while the chairs, beds and so on were chiefly of satin, light green and white, which had a very good effect. In Mrs Fitzherbert's house in Pall Mall, Mary Frampton's journal records a room 'hung with puckered blue satin'. Hepplewhite's *Guide* (1788) observes, *à propos* bed-hangings, that 'they may be of almost every stuff which the loom produces' but that 'in state-rooms, where a high degree of elegance and grandeur are wanted beds are frequently made of silk or satin, figured or plain, also of velvet, with gold fringe, &c.' Plain velvets were frequently used for hangings and upholstery, generally in muted shades such as the drab green used by Adam for the gathered wall-hangings of the state bedchamber at Osterley.

Watered silks and silk mixtures were also favourite materials for upholstery, while in the second half of the period chairs and settees were often covered in materials having wide or narrow satin stripes. Silk and silk mixture damasks were extensively used for both upholstery and hangings, as may be seen for instance from their frequent occurrence in Chippendale's bills. These damasks

had floral designs, often of a rather conventional character, in a single colour, generally red or blue, though yellow, green and other colours also occur. Damask was a favourite material for the hangings of state beds; the *Universal System* (1759–63) of Ince and Mayhew records a domed bed in blue damask, while a bed of about 1770 at Harewood has a valance of red damask. In the crimson drawing-room at Carlton House (about 1790) the wall-hangings and window curtains were, according to Pyne, of crimson 'satin damask of a beautiful figure and texture from the British loom'; similarly in the rose drawing-room the curtains and wall-hangings were of rose-coloured satin damask with gold fringes.

Among silks of more than one colour, that used by Adam for the wall-hangings, window curtains and upholstery of the red drawing-room (about 1770) at Syon, with a design of serpentine ribands and large semi-naturalistic flower sprays in white on a plum-red ground, makes an unusually bold effect. Normally more modest patterns were preferred, and fabrics such as the polychrome Genoa velvets with their large Baroque designs, so much used earlier in the eighteenth century, were no longer fashionable. Brocaded satins, with small polychrome flowers on white or pale-toned satin grounds, were much favoured.

Of woven stuffs in linen, wool and cotton, only the tablecloths and napkins of linen damask demand particular notice. Their designs, entirely in white, were generally floral or armorial; hunting scenes are also occasionally found.

Very little information is available regarding the origins of these various woven materials. The linen damasks seem to have been made in a number of places in England, Scotland and Ireland. Of the silks and velvets, some were no doubt imported from Lyons and other French and Italian centres of silk-weaving, but many were probably woven in England. The weaving of silk was carried on in various towns, among them Macclesfield, Manchester and Norwich, but the chief English centre of the craft remained the district of Spitalfields and Bethnal Green, where it seems to have been introduced by Huguenot refugees at the end of the seventeenth century. Unfortunately, the detailed history of Spitalfields silk-weaving remains to be written and little is known at present of the designers and master-weavers of the late Georgian period. The decline in the vogue for patterned silks, for both dress and furnishing purposes, evidently caused some distress and unemployment (it was estimated in 1776 that one thousand seven hundred and sixty-eight silk looms were idle), but it is likely that production remained at a sufficiently high level to fulfil most of the domestic demand both for plain and for patterned stuffs.

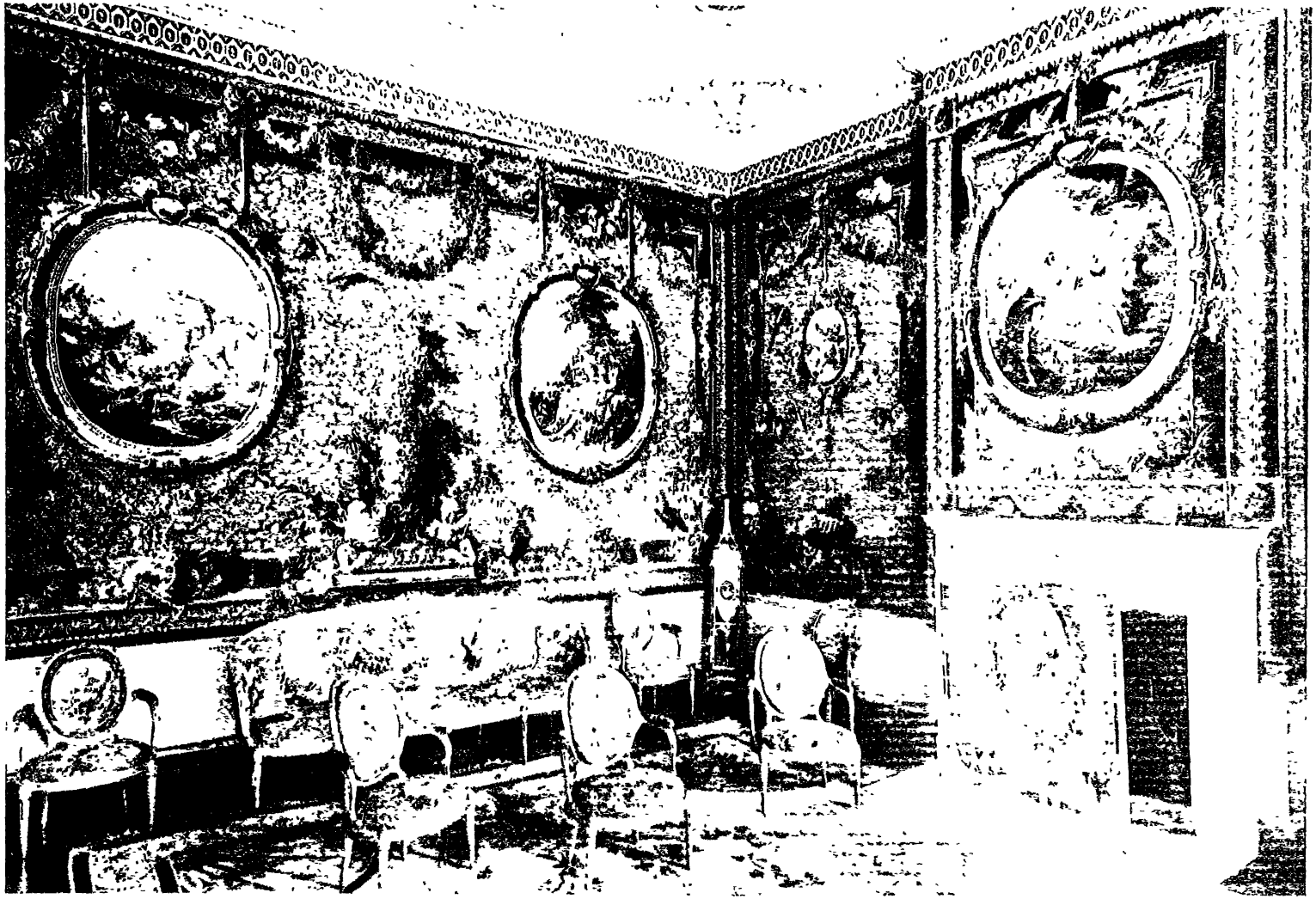
Tapestry

In the second half of the eighteenth century, the demand for tapestry wall-hangings dwindled almost to vanishing point. The great Flemish workshops, which had supplied England and the rest of Europe with most of their tapestries ever since the middle ages, decayed and died. The production of the last notable tapestry-weaver of the eighteenth century in England, Paul Saunders (died 1770), belongs essentially to the preceding period. Only the French centres of the craft, possessing the best designs and the most skilful weavers of the day, and supported by state patronage, kept alive the traditions of fine tapestry-weaving.

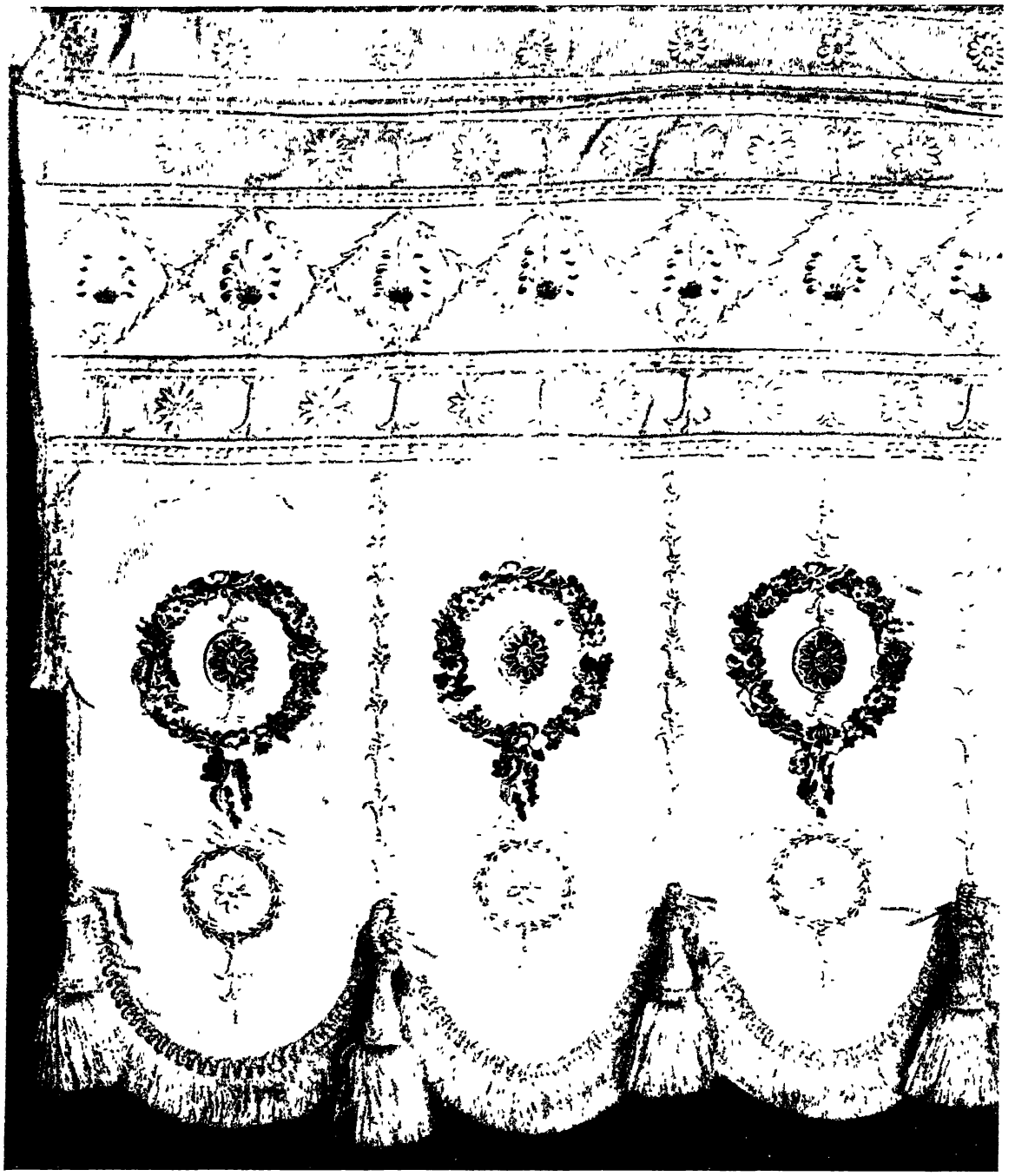
It is characteristic of the taste of the time that some of the most fashionable of the French designs were not of an exclusively pictorial type, but consisted mainly of simulated silk damask with a floral pattern, while the nominal subject of the tapestry was rendered in the guise of a small framed painting, apparently hanging on a wall covered with the feigned silk stuff. Tapestries of this type, the well known *Tentures de François Boucher*, in which the pictorial panels with the loves of the gods and other subjects were designed by Boucher and the floral surrounds by Maurice Jacques, were woven several times by Jacques Neilson at the Gobelins for English patrons. They were not intended to be hung indiscriminately in any convenient room, but were woven to measure, often with furniture *en suite*, for special tapestry rooms, where they were hung edge to edge, so as to cover the entire wall-surface above the dado,

facing page 108

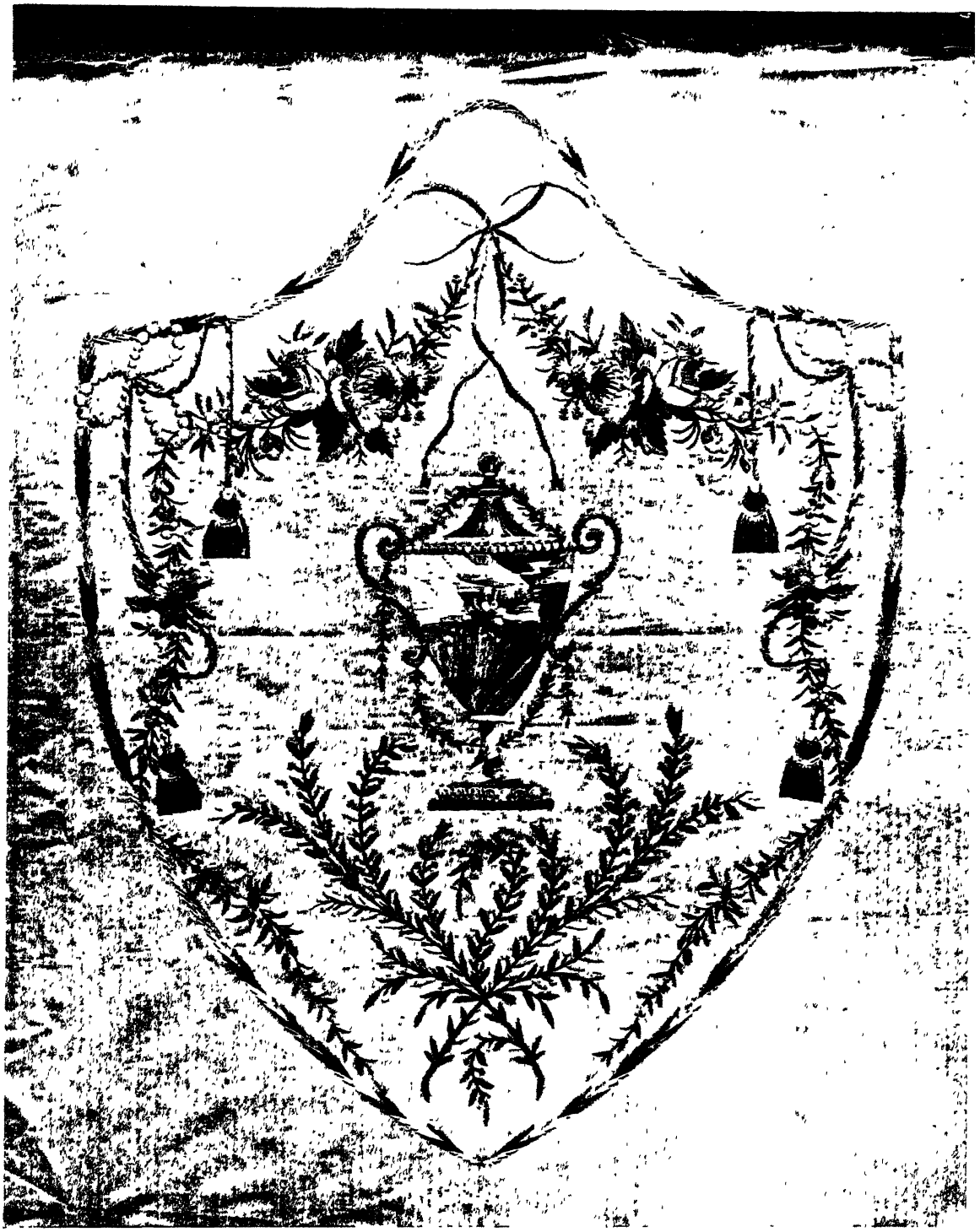
PLATE 53



Tapestry Room at Osterley Park. The room designed by Robert Adam; the tapestry hangings and upholstery woven at the Gobelins 1775–6, by Jacques Neilson, after designs by François Boucher.



Detail of coverlet of embroidered satin, designed by Robert Adam 1776, for the state bed at Osterley Park.



Embroidered panel for a pole screen, about 1790. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*

PLATE 55

Embroidered portrait of George III, after Zoffany, worked by Mrs Mary Knowles, *c.* 1771.
Victoria and Albert Museum.

PLATE 56

in the same way as a silk wall-hanging; it is noteworthy that this method of hanging tapestries seems to have been peculiarly English and was unknown in France. The more important of the sets of the *Tentures de François Boucher* woven for English houses are the following: (1) three large and eight small hangings, with two settees and six chairs, on a rose damask ground, woven 1766–71 for the Earl of Coventry, formerly at Croome Court; (2) three large and six small hangings, with two settees, twelve chairs and a screen, on a mauve damask ground, woven 1766–71 for William Weddell, at Newby Hall, Yorks.; (3) three large and five small hangings on a rose damask ground, woven 1766–71 for Sir Henry Bridgeman, at Weston Park; (4) one large and eight small hangings, with eighteen pieces of furniture, on a grey damask ground, woven 1767–9 for Sir Lawrence Dundas, originally hung at Moor Park and subsequently removed to 19 Arlington Street, London; (5) five large and eleven small hangings, with a settee, eight chairs and a screen, on a crimson damask ground, woven 1775–6 for Robert Child, at Osterley Park, (Pl. 53); (6) three large and three small hangings, with a settee, twelve chairs and two screens, on a crimson damask ground, woven in 1783 for the Duke of Portland, at Welbeck. These hangings for Welbeck represent the last notable commission for tapestries in the Georgian period.

Bibliography: Maurice Fenaille, *État général des tapisseries de la manufacture des Gobelins*, Vol. IV, Paris, 1907.

Embroidery

Embroidery, like tapestry, was much less prominent in the later Georgian house than it had been in earlier periods. In particular, needlework in *gros point* and *petit point*, which had been extensively used hitherto for wall-hangings, carpets and upholstery, failed to harmonize with the lightness and elegance of the new furnishing styles. It persisted, still using the large polychrome floral designs of the preceding period, for carpets, chairs and firescreens, down to about 1765, but thereafter it became comparatively rare. The few carpets and chairs worked in this kind of needlework during the late eighteenth century generally have insignificant geometrical diaper patterns in a restricted range of colour.

A technique more in harmony with prevailing taste was that of embroidering naturalistic flower-groups in flat stitches on a white or pale-coloured satin ground. This type of embroidery was principally used, as in the preceding period, for bed-furniture. The hangings of Queen Charlotte's bed (about 1775) at Hampton Court, of lilac and pale primrose satin, have attractive needlework of this kind worked by a Mrs Pawsey, who had a school of embroidery at Aylesbury. A cradle destined for one of Queen Charlotte's children, and now in the London Museum, has a white satin coverlet and curtains embroidered in a similar style. The green velvet and satin furniture of the domed state bed at Osterley, designed by Adam in 1776, also has flower garlands and classical motifs worked in this manner (Pl. 54). These provoked Horace Walpole's caustic observation that the bed was 'too like a modern head-dress, for round the outside of the dome are festoons of artificial flowers. What would Vitruvius think of a dome decorated by a milliner?' The same kind of embroidery, worked with coloured silks in flat stitches on a white satin or silk ground, continued in use down to the end of the century for the small oval, rectangular, or shield-shaped panels of pole-screens. In these panels the motifs most frequently seen are bouquets of naturalistic flowers, maps, or classical urns (Pl. 55); a pole-screen designed by Adam, in the Etruscan Room at Osterley, has an embroidered panel with an urn design.

Wall-hangings in needlework were extremely rare in this period, but Adam's work for Thomas Hogg at Newliston, near Edinburgh, included designs for twelve large embroideries inset into the panelling of the drawing room. These, worked by Lady Mary Hogg in wool appliqué, with the details partly stitched and partly painted in water colours, on a cream watered silk ground, show urns, sphinxes, acanthus scrolls and cameo panels. In humbler settings, the appliqué technique was utilized for coverlets, with floral motifs, cut from printed cottons, stitched to a cotton ground;

towards the end of the period floral panels were being specially printed to serve as centrepieces for such coverlets. A few examples of patchwork quilts, with geometrical designs built up from countless small regularly shaped pieces of silk or printed cotton, may also be attributed to this period.

There can be no doubt, however, that the type of domestic needlework most characteristic of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century was the embroidered picture. The retreat of embroidery into the picture-frame, a process which had begun already in the seventeenth century, now reached its culmination in an attempt to reproduce the effects of painting. In this field a number of ladies achieved a fame and eminence which today seem vastly exaggerated, if not entirely misplaced. The embroidered copies after paintings by old and modern masters which these ladies produced, covering their canvas completely with coloured worsteds in long irregular stitches which sought to imitate the brushwork of the painter, are often, indeed, remarkable for their dexterity, but it is hard to take seriously the taste which rated them equal, if not superior, to the paintings which they copied, and set on them values running into hundreds, and sometimes into thousands, of pounds. Of Miss Grey, of Northamptonshire, a contemporary observer notes that she astonished 'the world of painters by her works in worsted'; in 1755, there is mention of 'a bunch of grapes of her doing that are equal to anything of Rubens'; and the Princess of Wales, on seeing another picture of hers, after Rubens, is said to have given her an honorarium of a hundred guineas. It may be that the vogue for these needle-paintings owed something to Queen Charlotte's taste. Mrs Mary Knowles (1733–1807), referred to in a letter from Dr Johnson to Mrs Thrale as 'the Quaker, that works the sutile pictures', was a frequent visitor at Buckingham Palace, and one of her principal works was a portrait of George III after Zoffany, worked in 1771 at the express command of the Queen (Pl. 56). Horace Walpole had at Strawberry Hill a landscape after van Uden by her hand. The most renowned of the workers in this style, however, was Miss Mary Linwood (1755–1846) of Leicester. In 1776 and 1778 she showed specimens of her work at the exhibitions of the Royal Society of Artists, and in 1787, having first been received and complimented by the Queen, she opened a large exhibition of her embroidered pictures in London. This exhibition subsequently visited Edinburgh, Dublin and the chief provincial towns, and it was once more a feature of the London scene as late as 1831, when *The Times* commented enthusiastically on her last work, 'The Malediction of Cain', observing that 'the forms and expression of the figures discover the power of Michael Angelo, and the whole effect of the piece . . . is almost magical, and beyond the power of the pencil'. Her masterpiece, the 'Salvator Mundi' after Dolci, for which she is said to have refused an offer of three thousand guineas, she bequeathed to Queen Victoria; it still hangs at Windsor Castle. A collection of her work may be seen at the Leicester Museum.

The less skilful or ambitious needlewoman could emulate the productions of these virtuosi by buying panels of white silk on which pictorial designs had been drawn, chiefly in outline, but with the sky and flesh-parts carefully painted in water colours. The dresses, hair and landscape were then embroidered with coloured wools and silks in the characteristic long stitches, while the painted parts were left exposed. The subjects of these pictures are generally romantic scenes of a somewhat lugubrious cast – Charlotte at the tomb of Werther or Fame strewing flowers on the tomb of Shakespeare; mythological, Scriptural and Shakespearian subjects also occur. Another type of embroidered picture was worked in black silk only, on a white silk ground, in imitation of engravings; this style, essayed by Miss Linwood in 1782, was still being practised as late as the 1851 exhibition. Such pictures are generally topographical, though portraits and other subjects are also found.

The trend towards pictorialism in needlework also affected the embroidered sampler, which in this period almost entirely lost its original function as a practice and reference sheet for a variety of stitches and motifs and became a decorative exer-

cise in cross stitch, incorporating a representation of a house, human figures and other pictorial elements, together with some pious verses. Samplers of this type were frequently framed and hung on the wall like the embroidered pictures. Maps, of England, Europe and other parts of the world, were also worked and treated in the same way.

Bibliography: M. Jourdain, *English Secular Embroidery*, London, 1910; A. F. Kendrick, *English Needlework*, London, 1933.

Painted and printed textiles

Painted and printed textiles, though not generally used in the state rooms of the grandest houses, were none the less of great importance in late Georgian furnishing. This was no new phenomenon. In one form or another they had played a significant role since the Middle Ages. But the lightness of their effects was especially congenial to the new furnishing styles and they were extensively used as bed-hangings, coverlets and window-curtains, and for the upholstery of chairs and settees.

Some of the painted silks were imported from China; these have polychrome floral patterns executed in body-colour, generally on a white satin ground. Others were made in England. The brothers Francis Frederick and George Eckhardt, whose factory was in King's Road, Chelsea, took out a variety of patents from 1780 onwards for painted and printed silks, linens and papers; among their specialities were varnished, washable furnishing fabrics printed in gold and silver. Sheraton, in his *Drawing Book* (1791–4) writes of the printed and painted silks of the Eckhardts as being 'adapted for the purpose of ornamenting panels and the walls of the most elegant and noble houses', but no surviving examples of this type are known. Both Hepplewhite's and Sheraton's books suggest the use of small panels of painted or printed silk for the decoration of chairs; this usage is exemplified by a settee of about 1785 at Kyre Park, which has three oval panels of silk, painted with figure subjects, inserted in the back. Similar small panels, with figure scenes painted in water colours, were also employed for pole-screens, while a cabinet of about 1780 in the Lady Lever Art Gallery has its doors lined with satin panels painted with designs of urns and flowers. The Eckhardt factory is known to have closed in 1796, but others were no doubt active; as late as 1808, George Smith, in his *Household Furniture*, included painted satin among the materials suitable for expensively furnished rooms.

The import of chintz, the painted and dyed cotton material of India, had been banned since 1701, but it is clear that the prohibition was sometimes evaded. There is an amusing correspondence of 1775 between David Garrick and Sir Grey Cooper, in which the actor pleads for the release of some chintz bed-hangings, which, after being in his wife's possession for four years, had been seized by the Customs authorities. Garrick's wit was not wasted; the hangings, with their designs of slender trees, found their way back to his villa and, eventually, to the Victoria and Albert museum. Mrs Lybbe Powys, visiting Sir Walter Blount's house, Mawley, near Ludlow, in 1771, was moved to remark, 'I think Lady Blount has more chintz counterpanes than one house ever saw; not one bed without very fine ones.'

The work of the English printers of cotton and cotton mixture materials in the eighteenth century, to judge from the admiring comments of continental competitors, was second to none in both design and technique. Hepplewhite's *Guide* (1788) pays it a somewhat involved compliment in recommending for bed-hangings the employment of 'printed cotton or linen . . . the elegance and variety of which afford as much scope for taste, elegance and simplicity as the most lively fancy can wish'. Unfortunately, these materials were little valued by succeeding generations and surviving examples are rare. In particular the stuffs printed from wood-blocks, which formed the bulk of the production, have almost entirely disappeared. Their floral patterns, often of an Oriental character, were produced by the old Indian technique of madder-dyeing, in a colour range of blues, reds, and violets, with a little yellow and green, generally on a white ground;

dark, almost black, grounds were a special feature of the 1790's, and towards the end of the period the palette was enriched by advances in dye chemistry. Some of the best designs were produced in the old centres of the English cloth-printing industry, on the rivers Lea and Wandle near London, but these factories suffered heavily in this period from the competition of the rapidly developing Lancashire factories, which employed the technique of printing from rollers to introduce a new class of cheap, mass-produced goods.

Besides the block-prints, cloth printed from engraved copper plates in a single colour (red, blue, violet or sepia; additional colours were occasionally added by block-printing) on a white ground enjoyed a great vogue in this period. Such prints have come to be known as 'toiles de Jouy', with reference to the well-known examples produced at the Oberkampf factory at Jouy, near Versailles, but they had been an English speciality for fully a quarter of a century before Oberkampf first turned his attention to them. The earliest record of the process dates from 1752, when Mrs Delany visited at Drumcondra, in Ireland, 'a manufactory that is set up there of printed linens done by copper plates; they are excessive pretty'. This factory was that of Francis Nixon, who in 1757 transferred his activities to Phippsbridge, near Mitcham. In 1758, Benjamin Franklin, on a visit to London, sent home to his wife, for bed and window curtains '56 yards of cotton printed curiously from copper plates', and by the 1760's a considerable number of manufacturers had adopted the new technique. Some had the fortunate habit of signing their work. Without doubt the finest surviving specimens of the type are two signed by Robert Jones of Old Ford, whose factory and equipment (including two hundred copper plates and two thousand wood-blocks) were sold by auction in 1780. The first of these, dated 1761, and printed in red, has pastoral and other subjects derived from engravings by Berchem, Barlow and Sympson; the second, dated 1769 and printed in violet, with additional colours added from blocks, shows some elegantly drawn personages on shooting and fishing expeditions (Pl. 57). John Collins, of Woolmers in Hertfordshire, signed two prints with rustic subjects in 1765, and a *chinoiserie* piece, based on Sir William Chambers' engravings of his buildings in Kew Gardens, in 1766. A print with fashionably dressed ladies and gentlemen in a garden is signed by the engraver D. Richards of Manchester and dates from about 1785. A design commemorative of George Washington, doubtless made for export to the United States, bears the signature of Henry Gardiner, who operated a factory at Wandsworth in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. There are also a number of anonymous examples with floral, rustic, classical, *chinoiserie*, sporting and topical designs. Our knowledge of this type of textile print has recently been greatly extended by the discovery of three books (one now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, two in the Musée de l'Impression at Mulhouse) containing paper impressions from several hundred copper plates of London textile printers of the late eighteenth century. The popularity of these engraved furnishing prints declined after about 1790 and the early nineteenth century examples, often printed from rollers, tend to be less sophisticated in design and comparatively coarse in execution.

Bibliography: Frank Lewis, *English Chintz* (2nd edition), Leigh-on-Sea, 1942; *Catalogue of an Exhibition of English Chintz*, Victoria and Albert Museum, 1955.

Carpets

Heavy, durable fabrics suitable for floor-coverings may be made in a variety of ways – by embroidering in wool on canvas, by weaving, and by pile-knotting as in Oriental rugs. All three methods were in use in the late Georgian period, though the first-named, as has been mentioned above, became comparatively rare.

The tapestry process does not seem to have been applied to carpet-making in England, although carpets woven by this method at Aubusson in France were imported and used in this country. There was, however, a flourishing English industry engaged in the production of various other types of woven carpets. Some were double cloths, i.e., they consisted of two plain cloths of different colour woven together in such a way that first one

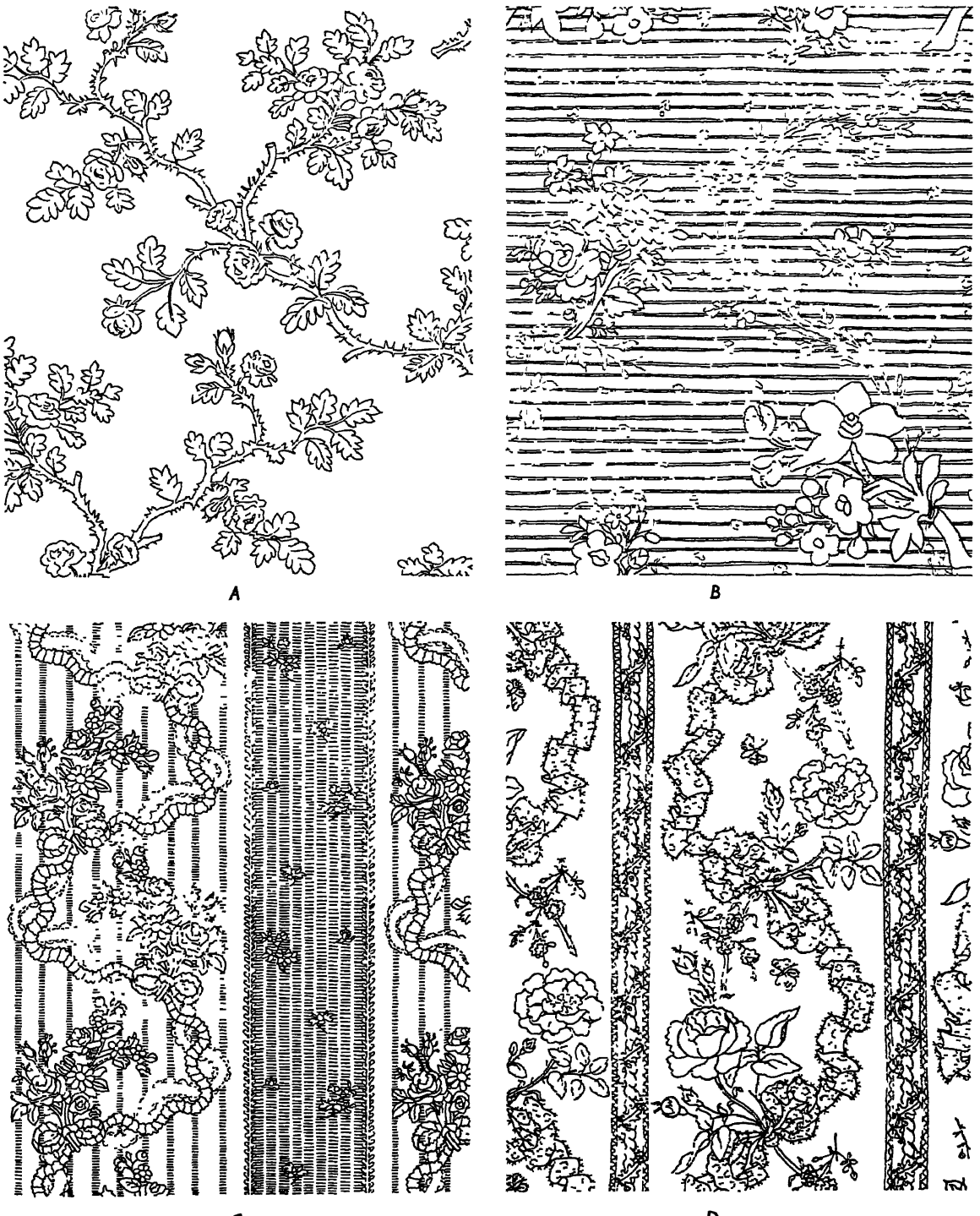


Fig. 1. English late Georgian textile patterns: (A) Silk, *c.* 1770. (B) Brocaded silk, *c.* 1770. (C) Brocaded silk, *c.* 1780. (D) Printed cotton, *c.* 1790. *All in Victoria and Albert Museum.*

and then the other cloth appeared on the surface, thus producing a thick material with a two-colour design. Kidderminster gave its name to this type of fabric, which had been made there since the seventeenth century; the same method was also in use in the Scottish centres of the industry, such as Kilmarnock. Better wearing qualities and patterns, with up to six colours, could be obtained in Brussels carpets, which have a looped pile woven in the manner of an uncut or terry velvet. These were woven at both Wilton and Kidderminster; by 1807, the flourishing carpet industry of the latter place numbered as many as a thousand looms. In a refinement of the Brussels type, introduced at Wilton and subsequently known as Wilton carpet, the loops of the pile are cut, on the analogy of a cut-pile velvet, giving a richer, softer texture. Unfortunately, no English woven carpet of this period has yet been identified. Most of them were probably plain or with fairly simple patterns, and were woven in narrow widths which could be joined together to form a large carpet.

Of hand-knotted carpets, the great majority in use in England were imported, as in previous periods, from Turkey, Persia and India, and conformed to the Oriental traditions of carpet design. A few may also have been imported from continental factories, of which the most important was that of the Savonnerie, near Paris. It was the arrival in London in 1750 of some former workers of the Savonnerie that brought about a renewal of the craft of carpet-knotting in England, where, although it had been widely practised in late Tudor and Stuart times, it had since almost entirely disappeared. In 1756, 1757 and 1758, with a view to encouraging the nascent industry, the Royal Society of Arts offered premiums to makers of hand-knotted carpets. The awards were shared equally, in the first year of the competition, between Thomas Moore, of Chiswell Street, Moorfields, and Thomas Whitty of Axminster; Moore's carpet was considered to be the finer but was denied first place since it was nearly three times as expensive as Whitty's carpet, though of the same size. The next year, Whitty again shared the prize, this time with Claude Passavant, a native of Basle who had set up a factory at Exeter, and in the third year he won the competition outright. These three firms, of Moore, Whitty and Passavant, were the principal English producers of hand-knotted carpets in the late Georgian period. Passavant's work, however, is known only from carpets made before 1760 and is therefore discussed in the preceding volume.

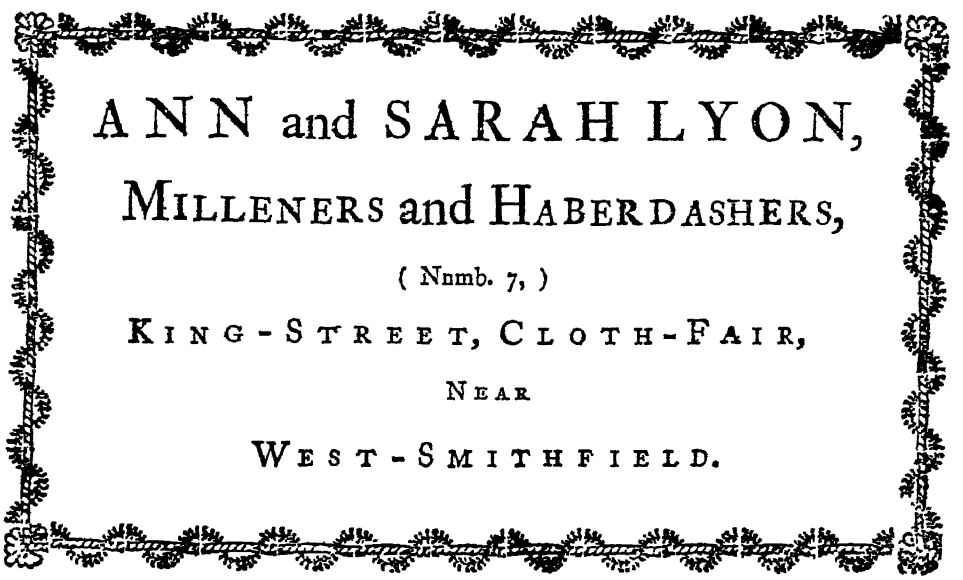
Moore evidently worked for the best houses. Horace Walpole ordered Moorfields carpets for the additions to Strawberry Hill which were completed in 1764. In 1768, Lady Mary Coke paid a visit to the factory and noted in her diary: 'They make several different kinds, and some remarkably fine: we saw one that was making for Ld. Coventry, that he had agreed to give a hundred and forty guineas for: it is indeed excessively fine. There are other kinds that are made like the persian, look quite as well.' Moore is best known for his collaboration with Adam. A carpet at Syon House, with a classical design by Adam carried out in numerous brilliant colours, is signed 'by . Thomas . Moore . 1769' (Pl. 58); an almost identical carpet belongs to the Earl of Shrewsbury. Some carpets with classical and floral motifs at Osterley Park, for which Adam's designs, two of them dated 1775 and 1778, are preserved in the Soane Museum, were probably made by Moore (Pl. 59A, B). Other carpets which probably resulted from this collaboration are two at Saltram, one in the Music Room at Harewood, and several formerly at 19 Arlington Street, which were probably removed, like the Boucher tapestries, from Moor Park. A notable feature of several of these Adam carpets is that they were designed to echo, without exactly reproducing, the designs of the ceilings beneath which they were placed.

Moore's principal competitor, Thomas Whitty, encouraged by seeing Parisot's factory at Fulham, began his first knotted carpet at Axminster in 1755; the factory flourished for many years and remained in his family until it closed down in 1835. Unfortunately, although a few documented pieces exist from the last period of the firm's activity, there is nothing that can be attributed with complete certainty to its first sixty years. One of the strongest candidates is a carpet

Fig. 2. Female workers 'pencilling' printed textiles, i.e. adding blues and yellows by hand-painting. 1754.

with a heterogeneous collection of motifs in the Pompeian style which was made for the Throne Room at Carlton House (now lent by Her Majesty the Queen to the Victoria and Albert Museum). Closely related to this, and likewise probably Axminster work, are several carpets whose designs of classical and floral motifs are characterized by large central medallions and narrow rectangular panels at each end. Carpets of this group include examples in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Pl. 60) and at Rocklease Manor, near Exeter, and one formerly at Woodhall Park, Herts. Other carpets attributed to Axminster are two with floral patterns at Althorp and four with classical designs, belonging to the Duke of Devonshire.

Bibliography: C. E. C. Tattersall, *A History of British Carpets*, Benfleet, 1934; *A Dictionary of English Furniture* (Revised edition by Ralph Edwards, 1954), s.v. Carpets.


ANN and SARAH LYON,

MILLENERS and HABERDASHERS,

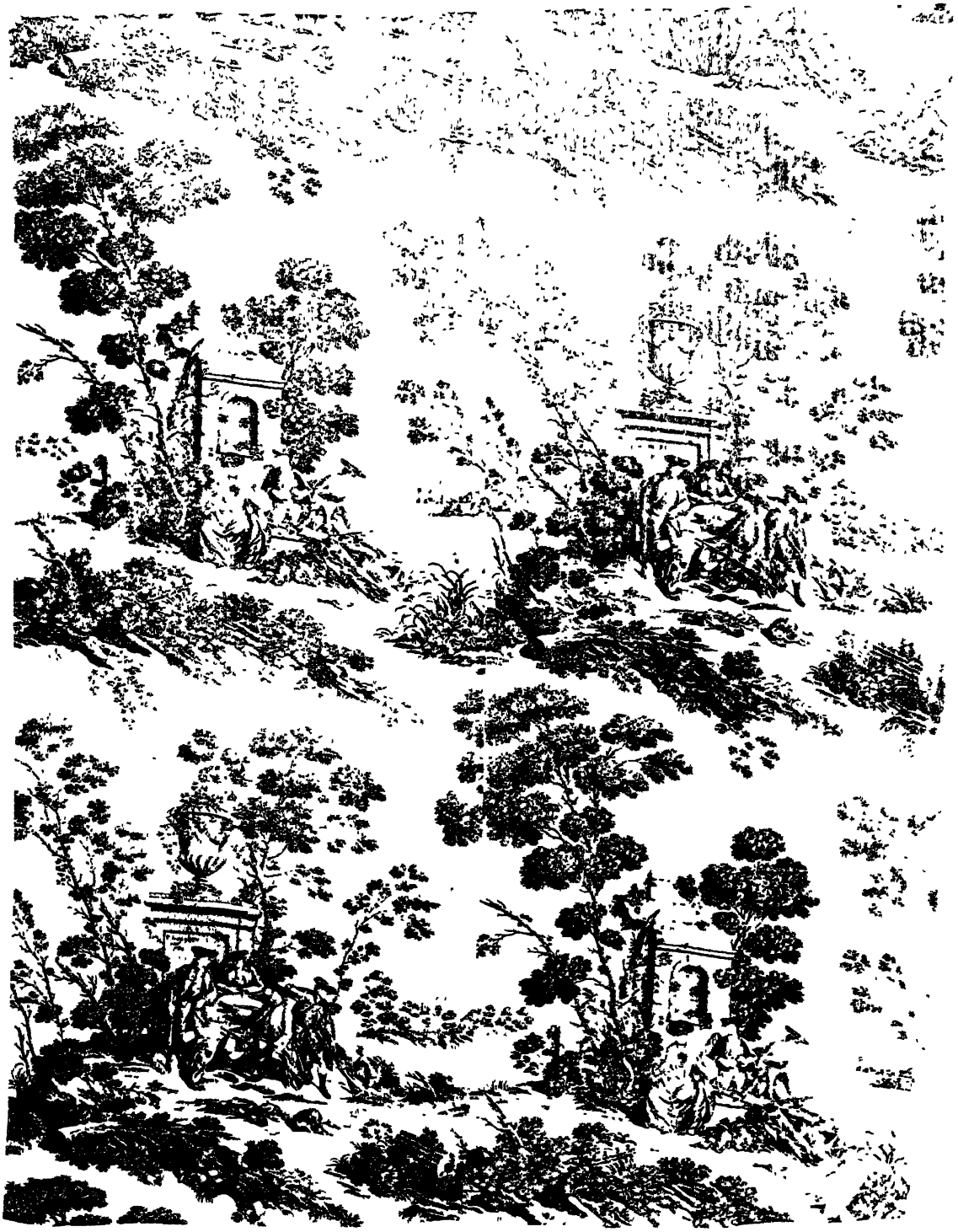
(Nnmb. 7,)

KING-STREET, CLOTH-FAIR,

NEAR

WEST-SMITHFIELD.

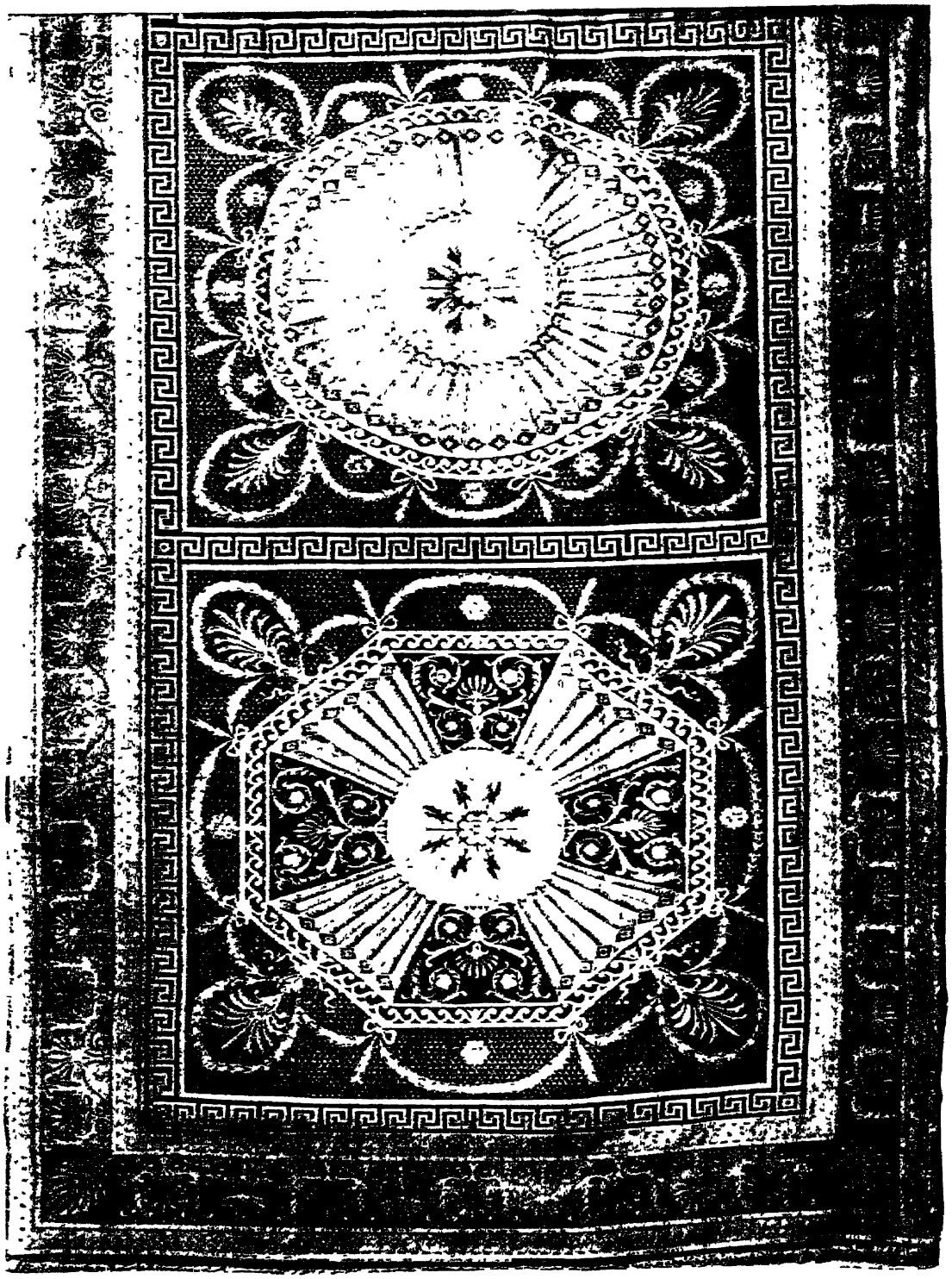
A late eighteenth-century printed handbill.



Furnishing print, by Robert Jones of Old Ford, 1769. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*

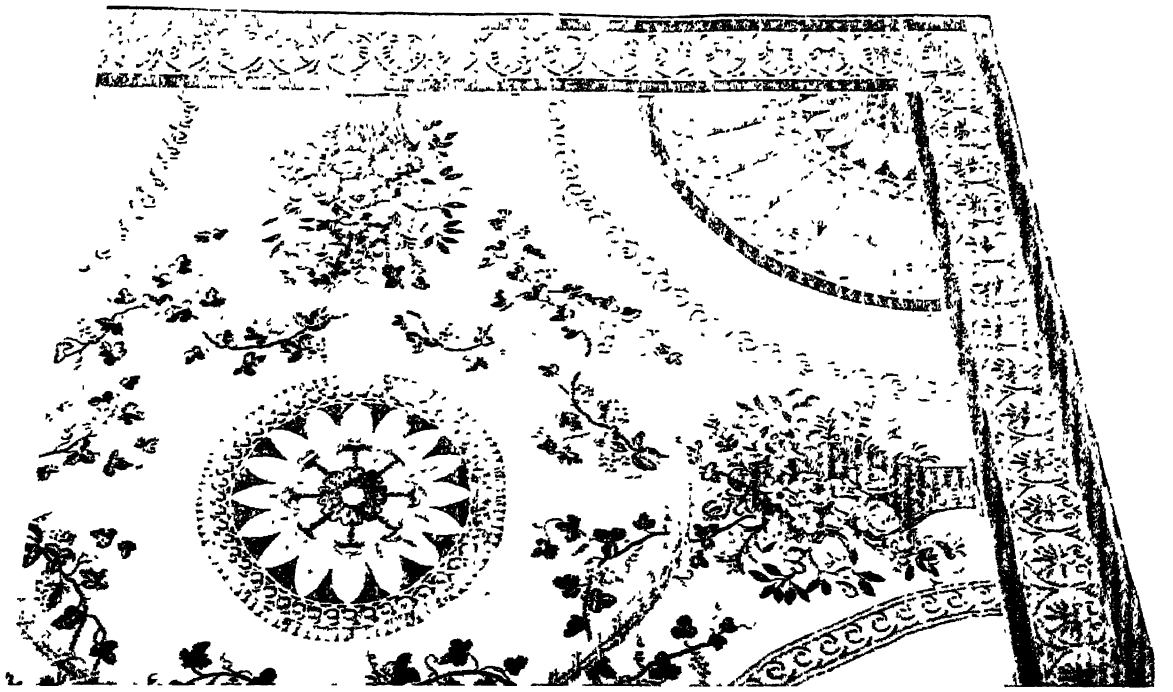
PLATE 57

facing page 116

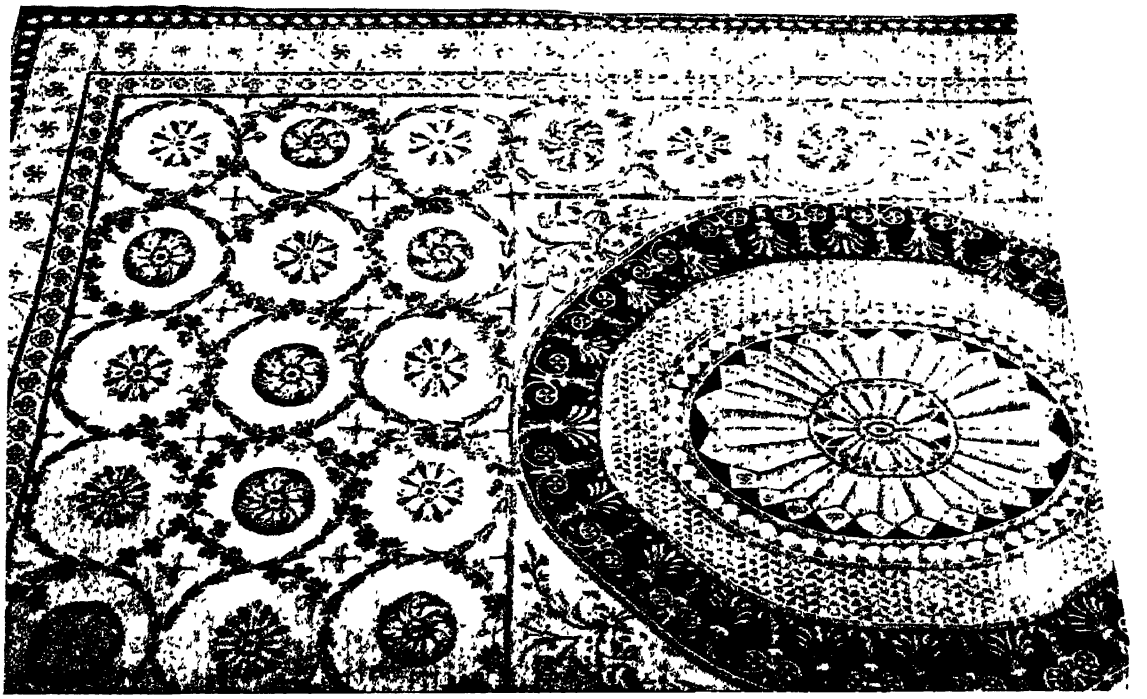


Carpet in the red drawing-room at Syon House: by Thomas Moore of Moorfields, 1769, after a design by Robert Adam. *The Duke of Northumberland.*

PLATE 58



(A) Carpet in the tapestry room at Osterley Park; by Thomas Moore, about 1775, after a design by Robert Adam.



(B) Carpet in the drawing-room at Osterley Park; by Thomas Moore, about 1775, after a design by Robert Adam.

PLATE 59

Carpet, probably Axminster, 1780–90. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*

PLATE 60

Costume

Costume

C. WILLETT CUNNINGTON

The fashions of an epoch, viewed from a certain distance, often seem to have been designed to suit a particular age-group. In the first half of the eighteenth century, for instance, male fashions imparted an air of dignity to a man of substance and assured position; one might say that those fashions had an 'optimum age' of about 35 to 40.

But in the second half of that century, and beyond, male fashions became more youthful in appearance, more slender and fitting the figure, less stiff and substantial; their optimum age was perhaps 20 to 30.

A similar, though less marked, change may be detected in the female fashions; a massive triangular shape became undulating with emphatic curves. But as there is always in them the desire – outspoken or whispered – of sex-attraction, the range of age-variation is narrower than in male fashions. Their optimum age sways to and fro from 17 to 30 but seldom beyond.

It is as though man's ideal woman varied at times from 'sweet seventeen' to *La Femme de trente ans*.

In the first half of the eighteenth century feminine fashions favoured the latter; in the second half there was a progressive movement towards the former, culminating in the virginal white frock of the Regency period displaying the charms of the youthful form.

This, then, was the essential feature in the fashions of the period 1760 to 1810, a phase of 'Youth knocking at the door'.

It was not unnatural that the fashions of England and France should have had much in common; if the English gentleman provided the model for men, the young French queen Marie Antoinette was the ideal mannequin for women.

There was also a practical reason why this should have been so: from the beginning of the century the English gentleman had worn woollen textiles for his day suit and towards its close was using them also for evening, reserving silks and satins for ceremonial wear. And English woollen cloth had become the best in the world. On the other hand French silks were unrivalled and English women of fashion naturally favoured them. So that male fashions tended to come from England, female fashions from France.

The Revolution of 1789 was at first viewed with a good deal of sympathy from this country and there seemed nothing to interrupt the exchange of fashions until the Terror led in 1793 to the onset of a war lasting twenty years.

The event divided the period 1760–1810, and with it the trend of fashion in each country. Thanks to smuggling the interchange of textiles and costume designs did not cease during the long war, but in the exciting atmosphere of war, and without the check of foreign criticism, English taste was free to run riot.

It is convenient, then, to take the onset of war in 1793 as a division and to treat the fashions of each part separately.

The former was a phase of extravagant luxury with an abundance of imported silks from France; the latter a phase of wartime substitutes and imported cottons from India.

Whenever the pendulum of fashion swings in

this way towards younger forms of expression it coincides always with a phase of new and disturbing ideas floating in the social consciousness; ideas repugnant to the mature mind of the middle-aged, but attractive and exciting to the younger generation; whereupon fashion turns scornfully away from the one and casts its glamour on the other.

In France those new ideas, traced to the Encyclopedists, exploded in the Revolution of 1789; but they were germinating in England too. Social unrest, an upthrust from the lower classes against the upper, a breaking-down of forms of class-distinction, and a demand for a more democratic form of government, all these were disturbing the social structure in the opening years of George III's reign. In 1760 the heavy Hanoverian atmosphere of the Court disappeared; the new king was a young man of 22 with an English love of outdoor activities, and by the time George III had reached middle age the Prince of Wales had become the leader of fashion. Men's dress could hardly fail to be affected by the youthfulness of, first, sovereign, and then prince.

Feminine fashions tend always to follow man's lead; as he appears more youthful or more mature, so woman hastens to adjust her age to his taste. In the period following 1760 it was natural that her fashions should have started to become younger. Once this direction was taken the impetus swept on until, near the close of the century, the desire to discover modes still more youthful than the last produced the so-called 'classical dress'.

This doubtless had a resemblance to the garb of ancient Greece, but its more obvious appeal was that it was white. Being of cotton and cheap, any woman for a few shillings could assume the dress of a young girl. Being worn with a minimum of underclothing it had the further advantage of revealing the outlines of the whole body and for the first time the shape of the lower limbs became visible; a fashion which favoured only the youthful form and made the middle-aged look ridiculous.

Caricatures of the period perpetually satirized the spectacle of what the Prince Regent described as 'mutton dressed like lamb'. Never before had feminine fashions been so merciless to maturity.

The Macaroni

Fashions are not only sensitive to prevalent ideas which they attempt to express, but also to certain kinds of events. The reign of George II opened triumphantly; the victories of Clive and Coote had established the English hold on India, whence began to flow homeward a stream of Nabobs laden with spoils.

This new type of *nouveaux riches*, eager to exhibit their wealth, excited an orgy of extravagance in the fashions of the 'seventies, accompanied by a phase of delirious gambling; fortunes were won – or lost – by the turn of a dice-box.

The war with the American Colonies and its humiliating defeats passed almost unnoticed by the world of fashion; far more attention was being paid to that strange phenomenon the Macaroni. 'The Macaroni Club', wrote Horace Walpole in 1764, 'is composed of all the travelled young men who wear long curls and spying-glasses.' It had originated as a kind of protest against the crude fashions of the day, not unlike the Aesthetic Movement of a century later, and the members affected an extreme sensibility and an effeminate style of dress. This soon became yet another form of fantastic extravagance, spreading so widely that contemporaries detected the taint in the costume of the learned professions and there were Macaroni ladies clothed in Macaroni textiles. 'What is England now?' exclaimed Walpole in despair. 'A sink of Indian wealth filled with Nabobs and emptied by Macaronis.'

Beyond the charmed circle of fashion it is not surprising that there was a rising tide of discontent, together with complaints that those decent barriers which used to separate the social classes were disappearing. It was becoming difficult to distinguish the gentleman from his base imitators.

The fact that the tension did not, as in France, explode into revolution was perhaps partly due to this freedom to imitate the fashions and habits of the quality; it allowed a repressed force to dissipate its energy in vulgar mimicry. Our native gift of snobbery proved, as always, a steadying

influence. Our fashions in the 1780's, so admired in France, seemed to have a freer air; men with a suggestion of the hunting field, and women, discarding the hoop, wearing even cloth 'tailor-mades' (which they called 'habits').

Sport, in many forms, captured the fancy of all classes; with hunting, horse-racing, prize-fighting, cock-fighting and cricket matches available, who would exchange these for the doubtful excitements of a revolution?

Male fashions, 1760–1793

The suit comprised coat or frock, waistcoat and breeches. The *coat*, now worn for full dress only, was close-fitting, the signs of waist and flaring of skirts disappearing after the 'sixties, the fronts being sloped away; from the 'seventies the curve away from the waist increased so as to expose the bottom of the waistcoat. The close-fitting sleeves had closed cuffs, usually small. From 1765 a narrow stand collar was added. The buttons were flat.

The *frock*, a garment originally adopted by the gentleman from his social inferiors and then somewhat loose, was now close-fitting and distinguished from the coat by its flat turned-down collar. At first worn for 'undress' it became from the 'seventies worn on all occasions except at Court, where a fully trimmed version, the 'French frock', was allowed. The English frock was always plain except for braid edging.

For riding and sport its length was reduced and the skirts often caught back on each side, leading to their being cut away into a 'tail coat' about 1790.

The collar (known as a 'cape') rose from 1785 into a 'stand-fall' for dressy occasions, becoming the 'frock-coat'.

It was single-breasted until 1780, then double-breasted with lapels, often angular and becoming wider in the 'nineties.

Its buttons, unlike those of the coat, were large, becoming enormous and plate-like in the 'seventies, and of metal.

An inside breast-pocket was introduced by the Macaronis in 1777.

The *waistcoat*, without sleeves, had the skirts of the foreparts cut back at an angle and in the 'eighties gradually shortened, when the popular style was the square-cut 'Newmarket', becoming general in the 'nineties. At first single-breasted, the double-breasted form appeared occasionally in the 'sixties and 'seventies and was very common in the 'eighties and 'nineties.

It had two rectangular pockets; from the 'eighties without flaps.

The *breeches* were close-fitting, becoming excessively tight; closed by whole- or small-falls. The knee was covered over the stocking, with a knee-buckle, replaced by strings in the 'nineties. Braces buttons, one on each side in front, began to appear at the end of the 'eighties, and the garment was beginning to be known as 'smallclothes', from the 'seventies.

Materials

For *coats* and *frocks*, cloth for day wear; for 'dress', velvet, brocade, silks and satins.

Waistcoats: cassimere, fancy silks. *Breeches*, cashmere, buckskin, and stocking-net.

Other garments: The *nightgown* or *morning gown*, a wrapping negligee worn indoors in place of a frock.

The *banyan*, a loose short gown often worn out-of-doors in place of a frock; knee-length with a wrapping front.

The *surtout* or *great coat*, with two or three broad falling collars.

Neck and wrist wear

The cravat was a strip of lawn or muslin worn round the neck, loosely knotted under the chin and the ends hanging, a fashion favoured by the Macaronis.

The stock was a folded neckcloth round the neck, fastened behind by a buckle. Steadily increasing in height it became known as a 'cravat' from 1785 and was then usually made of muslin.

Lace ruffles were worn at the wrist, disappearing temporarily in 1790 as a 'democratic' gesture in sympathy with the French Revolution.

Footwear

Shoes had rounded toes until 1790; heels were

low and square. Red heels for Court wear were revived in the 'seventies.

The buckles, oblong and smooth, became enormous from 1775 to 1785. At the end of the 'eighties shoe-strings began to replace buckles.

Jockey boots, close-fitting, ending below the knee, the tops turned over, were fashionable for walking in from the 'seventies.

Stockings

A fashion for stripes was marked in the 'eighties and 'nineties.

Headgear

The three-cornered hat, the brim turned up or 'cocked' in a variety of forms (the 'Kevenhuller' with a high cock in front, in the 'sixties; the 'Fantail' with the brim turned up high behind, from the 'eighties); the bicorne hat with front and back brim turned up, from the 'eighties. The round hat, with flat-topped crown and flat brim, appearing first in the 'seventies for riding and destined gradually to develop into the gentleman's 'top hat'; commonly made of beaver.

The hair

Wigs were worn by all classes until the war-tax in 1795 on hair-powder. The many varieties fall into two groups:

(1) Wigs without queues: The bob with several rows of curls round the back of the head. Full dress bobs came into fashion in 1760. The scratch bob covered only the back of the head and simulated the natural hair. Cut wigs were short, without curls; worn by the working classes.

(2) Wigs with queues: These gradually became smaller.

The front ('toupee' or 'foretop') was brushed up, and in the 'seventies raised on pads, the natural hair blending with that of the wig by the use of pomatum, the whole powdered.

The sides of the wig had rigid tubular curls ('buckles') lying horizontally, replaced in the 1780's by bushy hair.

The queue had various forms:

(*a*) the tye, a short bunch of curls tied at the nape of the neck.

(*b*) the ramilies, the tail plaited and tied.

(*c*) the pigtail, very long and plaited with ribbons.

The queue became shorter from 1780.

The bag-wig: for full dress, the queue being concealed in a short black silk bag at the nape of the neck.

The Catogan or Club wig: the queue, broad and flat, was turned up on itself and tied to form a pendant loop of hair; very popular in the 'seventies, especially with the Macaronis.

The Major or Brigadier wig: military but often assumed by civilians, resembled a Bob with two corkscrew curls tied together to form a queue.

Wigs were made, not only of hair (human, horse's, cow's, goat's) but also textiles such as mohair and worsted; of copper and iron wire (in the 'sixties and 'seventies), and of feathers, usually drake's or mallard's, which were used to form the summit. Parson's 'feather tops' were very common, and feather wigs for sporting.

Hair powder, of starch, was white for dress wear but blue and other colours were also used; the powder being applied by a blower or dredger or powder puff, the face and clothing protected by a powdering jacket or gown.

The face was clean-shaven.

The beau carried a muff, a long cane, and in the 'seventies 'all the very fine men wear two watches'. A snuff-box was essential. The more extreme exquisites, with faces rouged and patched, in tight stays and false calves, and heavily scented:

> 'Soft silky coxcombs, full of nice punctilio,
> All paste, pomatum, essence and pulvilio,
> With huge bouquets, like beaupots, daily go,
> Tricked out like dolls, to pace the Rotten Row.'

Male fashions, 1794–1810

The war with France from 1793 and 'the era of Jacobinism and Equality' had a marked effect on male costume. 'It was then', wrote Wraxall, 'that pantaloons, cropped hair and shoe-strings, as well as the total abolition of buckles and ruffles and disuse of hair-powder characterized the men.'

To indicate democratic sympathies it was with some the fashion to look slovenly. 'Slouch is the word now, you know. That's the fashion; that's

modern ease' (G. Colman, *The Heir at Law*, 1797).

And while gentlemen were affecting to look like ruffians 'the Lower Classes are invading the boundaries and privileges of the great and fashionable, aping the dress of persons of rank'. (*The Morning Chronicle*, 1800).

In the midst of this fashion ferment there appeared, soon after 1794, a sartorial Napoleon to restore order to chaos. It was the genius of George Brummel which introduced an entirely new idea into the art of male costume.

The Brummel 'Code Napoleon' ordained that henceforth the dress of a gentleman must be distinguished by an inconspicuous propriety, and that its design must no longer be pictorial but architectural; that is to say, it must express social superiority not by colours but by line and proportion, which meant high quality in tailoring and exquisite taste in the wearer.

Against the vulgar intrusions of democracy he set the subtle barrier of 'good taste'. Reform was necessary as the war was producing 'everything disgusting in the name of Fashion . . . slouched hats, jockey boots, half-boots, leather breeches, cropped heads, unpowdered hair . . . and the present race of Bucks without blood, Beaux without taste, and Gentlemen without manners' (*The Oracle*, 1804).

From 1794 the frock-coat developed an immensely high stand-fall collar cut back in front to allow for the high neckcloth swathed round the neck up to the chin. The fronts of the frock were cut away leaving little more than coat-tails at the back, reaching to the knee. The double-breasted style was general, worn buttoned up so that only the bottom of the waistcoat was seen. Wide lapels and large flat buttons gave a military air.

The sleeves, close-fitting, were slightly gathered at the shoulder seam, becoming padded up by 1800. The cuff was inconspicuous, often only a line of stitching or left unbuttoned.

The coat, for full dress, had a high stand collar; in other respects it resembled the frock-coat.

The old-fashioned style of frock with turned-over collar of no great height continued to be worn for sporting activities. It is noteworthy that never before had the gentleman worn a buttoned-up coat concealing the waistcoat; the latter was losing its importance, being very short and square-cut, generally double-breasted and having a stepped stand-collar with wide angular lapels.

Near the close of the century the double-breasted waistcoat might have a rolled collar continuous with the shawl lapel, though this rolled collar was quite uncommon.

A feature of the 'nineties was the underwaistcoat, a shortened version of the over-waistcoat but protruding an inch or so above its upper border. The under-waistcoat seems to have declined in favour after 1800.

The aim of the short waistcoat and cut-away coat fronts was to expose as much as possible of the legs and thighs encased in tight breeches or pantaloons; a fashion clearly designed to be sex-attractive and favouring the slim figure of youth.

Breeches reached well below the knees where they were tied with strings. The opening was a small fall. As braces had become necessary with these skin-tight garments braces buttons came into use.

Pantaloons, appearing in the 'nineties, were equally tight and reached to the ankles where the sides were slit for the purpose of pulling on and then buttoned.

From 1800 male fashions tended to become somewhat modified; the day frock-coat becoming known as a 'morning coat,' often single-breasted though still buttoned up, developed a rolled collar and lapels shrank in size or disappeared.

The waistcoat, usually striped, with a lower stand-collar cut well back, and the neckcloth now no longer enveloping the chin but with a broad bow spread under it.

By 1806 the day and evening coat had acquired an inside breast pocket and pockets in the tails, the outside pockets having often disappeared (Figs. 1, 2).

For evening the white waistcoat and the coat of dark blue or green with light-coloured breeches and white silk stockings, were becoming the recognized garb of the gentleman. By 1807 the evening breeches were invariably black.

In 1810 nankeen trousers were becoming

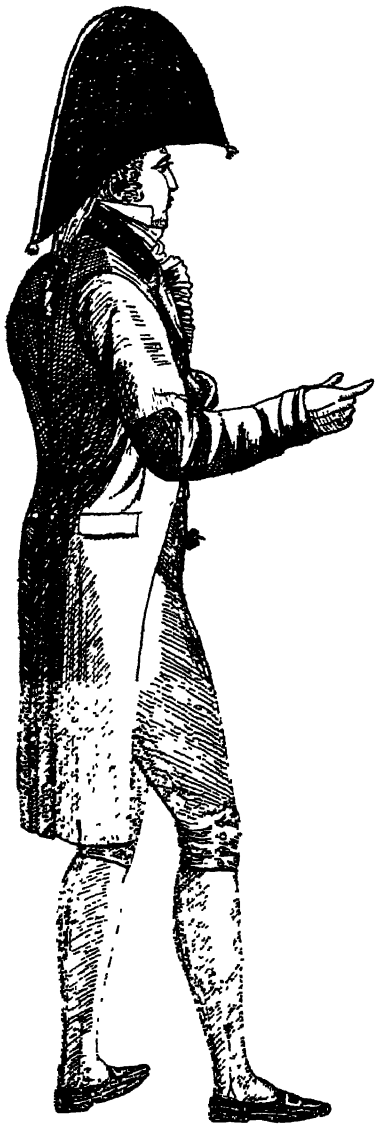


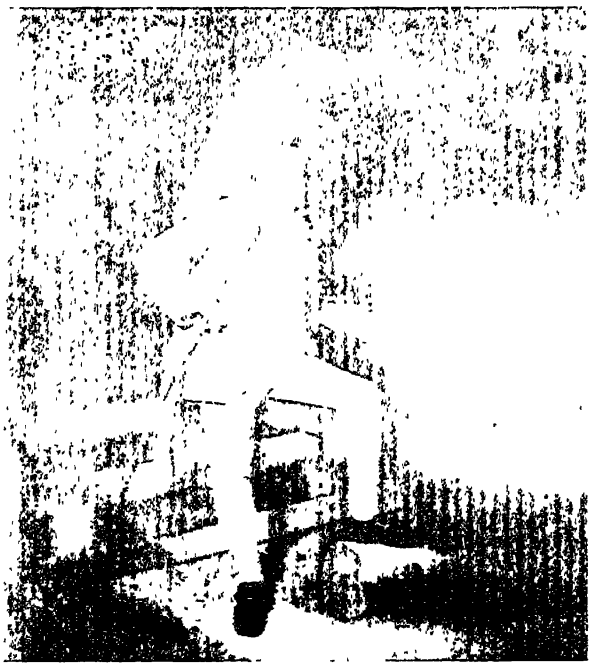
Fig. 1. Full Dress, December 1806. *Le Beau Monde, or Literary and Fashionable Magazine.*

Fig. 2. Morning Walking Dress, 1806. *Le Beau Monde, or Literary and Fashionable Magazine.*

fashionable at seaside resorts for summer wear by day; this garment, borrowed from sailors, and destined eventually to obliterate the allurement of the male leg in an irrecoverably dark, total eclipse, had a social significance; a century before the gentleman had adopted the working-man's frock, and now the sailor's trousers, a plebeian garment to which ladies of refinement would allude as 'a gentleman's inexpressibles'.

There was, of course, the exquisite Dandy 'dressed for the morning in my Brutus wig, coatee, waist-coateen, boots, gilt spurs, Barcelona neck-cloth, my shape braced up in stays' (*The Morning Herald*, 1809) but such, who figure so largely in the caricatures of the period, scarcely represented the true fashions.

The tax on hair-powder in 1795 led to the general abandonment of wigs except by those who



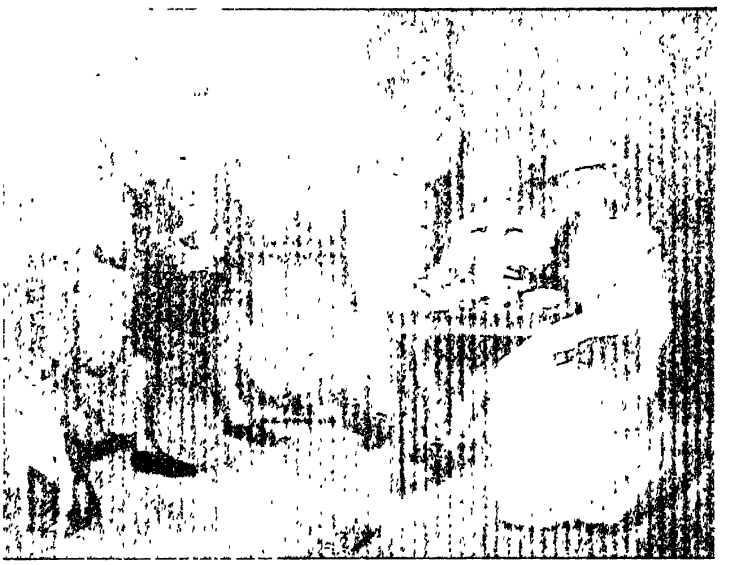
(A) Duke of Grafton, 1760. Country suit of cloth, the frock and waistcoat of same material. *Temple Newsam House, Leeds.*

(B) Four men, by BATONI, 1766. Two wear coats, two frocks. Each shows considerable difference in details (cuffs, neckwear, embroidery, materials).

PLATE 61

Francis Fountayne-Whichcot and wife, 1768–70. The lady in open robe edged with robings, triple wrist ruffles and apron. The man in a suit (coat with small cuffs). Tie wig. *Temple Newsam House, Leeds.*

(A) A Macaroni, 1772. *From 'The Macaroni Magazine'.*



(B) The Caddick Family, 1785. Note a double-breasted waistcoat, another horizontally striped. The lady in bouffant dress and towering hat. *Walker Gallery, Liverpool.*

(C) 'Autumn', a print by R. SAYER, 1786. The woman's feathered hat, puffed-out bodice and flounced skirt of her gown are conspicuous. The man in double-breasted waistcoat with wide lapels and round hat.

(D) Sir Christopher and Lady Sykes, by ROMNEY, 1786. His frock with high standfall collar and skirts sloping away; she in open robe and pointed bodice. *Temple Newsam House, Leeds.*

(A) A 'Jessamy' caricature. 1790, wearing a bicorne hat, a huge catogan wig, short coat and high stand-fall collar

(B) John Jackson, by B. MARSHALL, 1810. A double-breasted frock coat with wide rolled collar, tight breeches. The high stepped collar of the waistcoat is just visible.

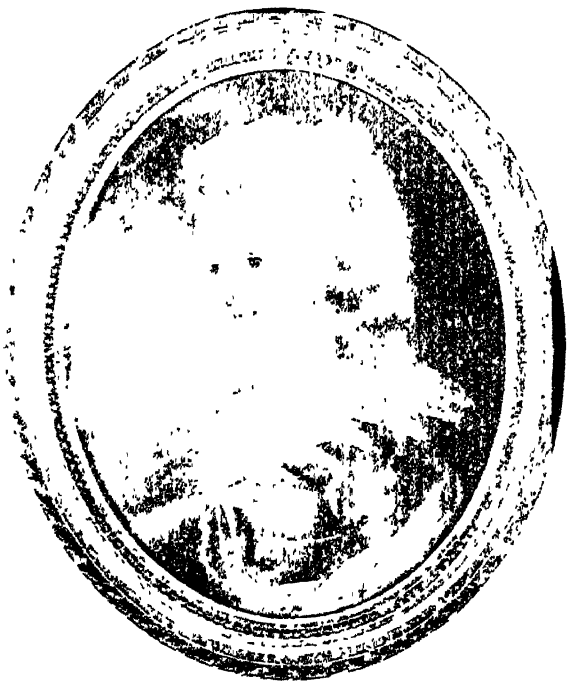
A Fashion plate Lady in dress of 1766.

(B) A Lady in riding dress and another in Court dress of 1778. *From 'The Ladies' Pocket Book'.*

(A) Fashion plates of 1784. One lady wears an open robe and the other a closed gown with fichu scarf. *From 'The Ladies' Pocket Book'.*

(B) A duchess, 1770. The 'Dormeuse' Ca

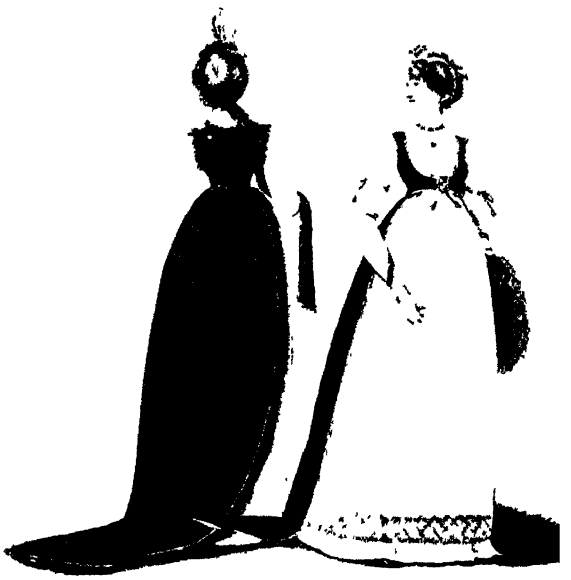
(C) Fashion plate, 1789. Figure on left shows a towering hat, the shoulders draped in a scarf, and high-waisted dress. The other shows the back of a riding habit. *From 'The Ladies' Pocket Book'.*



A

B

(A) Catherine, wife of John Lucas of Stouthall, 1788. The vandyke edging round the top of the bodice was the height of fashion.



(B) Two ladies in day dress, 1801. High-waisted white cotton dresses suitable for winter. Thin pointed slippers without heels. *From Heideloff's 'Gallery of Fashion'.*

(C) Two evening dresses 1801. Trained open robes over light-coloured dresses. Figure on the left wears a turban. *From Heideloff's 'Gallery of Fashion'.*

(A) Two ladies in evening dress, 1807. Muslin frocks over coloured slips. Very high-waisted and trained; short shoulder sleeves, elbow gloves. *From 'Fashions of London and Paris'.*

(B) Three ladies in day dress, 1808. All wearing round dresses, high-waisted; the one on the left wears a Spencer of lilac sarcenet over a white muslin walking dress. The centre figure wears a white muslin dress, made with a 'waistcoat bosom'. The right-hand figure is in a cambric frock, buttoned behind, with a Spanish vest of blue sarcenet. *Fashion plate from 'La Belle Assemblée'.*

(c) Lady at her toilet, 1810, by GILLRAY.

PLATE 68

chose to pay the guinea tax; the rest wore their own hair somewhat long and dishevelled—the 'Brutus crop'; short whiskers imitating the military began to appear soon after 1800. Powder on the natural hair was still used for 'full dress'.

Out of doors the fashionable footwear was the Hessian boot, calf-length and decorated in front with a tassel, and jockey boots reaching nearly to the knee and having the tops turned over; indoors, long pointed shoes with low heels.

The overcoat or surtout had two or three cape-collars.

The round hat had replaced the angular, and the crown was tall and straight, the brim often very wide; but with the new century the shape began to approximate towards that of the Victorian 'top hat'.

Feminine fashions

In the half century from 1760 to 1810 the feminine shape passed through a striking sequence of changes. In 1760 the domed hoop had passed its maximum size and had begun to shrink, so that from a vast triangular outline woman's form became in the 'seventies undulating with small 'pocket hoops' and in 1775 a 'false rump' (or bustle). In the 'eighties the hoop vanished (except for Court wear) and exaggerated curves, with a bouffant figure resembling that of a pouter pigeon, became the mode.

At the onset of the great war in 1793 the artificial shape which woman had preserved for centuries was discarded and thin flowing 'Classical' robes, over a minimum of underclothing, revealed the outlines of the body to the astonished spectator.

As the new century opened a more tubular outline with stiff vertical lines completed the transformation of shape, from that of the Great Pyramid to Cleopatra's Needle.

The phase of artificial shapes, 1760 to 1793

The three structural types of dress were the *open robe*, exposing in front an ornamental petticoat, the *closed robe* or *gown*, and the separate *bodice* and *skirt*, each type with its varieties.

(1) *The open robe.*

(*a*) The sack with box-pleated back and the overskirt, trained or short, commonly hitched up to expose the flounced petticoat. A style going out of fashion by 1780.

(*b*) The English gown with close-fitting back continuous with the overskirt; sleeves to the wrist. A style lasting well into the 'eighties.

(*c*) The nightgown, a fashionable demi-toilette with the overskirt pleated all round to the bodice but open in front. This persisted into the 'eighties.

(*d*) The Polonese, the height of fashion from 1770 to 1785; the overskirt was bunched up into three puffed-out draperies at the back exaggerating the bustle shape. 'It is janty beyond expression.'

In the 'eighties the open robe acquired a high waist, the front of the bodice puffed out by a 'buffon'. With this a sash was worn and the trained overskirt no longer hitched up.

(2) *The closed robe*, developing in the 'eighties and being known as a 'gown'; the bodice closed by lacing, and the lower part by buttons or ties to the hem. Long tight sleeves to the wrist.

The 'great-coat dress', popular in the 'nineties, resembled a buttoned-up great-coat.

(3) *The separate bodice and skirt*, as a form of 'undress' or morning dishabille, comprising a jacket and petticoat, appeared in the 'seventies. A version was the 'Riding Habit', the jacket cut on masculine lines and worn with a waistcoat. Made of cloth, this forerunner of the 'tailormade' was worn not only for riding but also as a morning costume.

Neckwear

From the 'seventies on the neck was draped with a kerchief, very much puffed out in the 'eighties (the 'buffon') and often a ruff, while a tippet covered the shoulders.

Other accessories: Aprons long or short were worn on all occasions.

Outdoor garments were cloaks, long and short, with threequarter-length hooded cardinals, and pelisses, threequarter-length with armhole slits.

From the 'eighties, after the hoop had been discarded, great coats buttoned down the front.

Headgear

For indoors, butterfly-shaped 'fly caps' in the

Fig. 3. Ladies in the most fashionable headdresses, 1780.

'sixties; followed by mob caps and in the 'seventies the 'dormeuse' with side flaps concealing the cheeks. The cap increased in size in the 'seventies and 'eighties as the coiffure expanded. Turbans for 'dress' and 'undress' were worn from the 'sixties on.

For outdoor wear hoods and calashes from the 'seventies.

As the hair mounted in height in the 'seventies the hat was either very small or else large and worn tilted on one side or the coiffure covered with a towering beehive-shaped hat.

The brim expanded in the 'eighties, becoming the shape familiar in Gainsborough's portrait of the Duchess of Devonshire; or with a puffed soft crown (the 'balloon hat') or tall in the shape of a flower-pot.

Immense attention was devoted to the head and hair in the 'seventies with masses of artificial hair raised on pads and rolls, mixed with pomatum and covered with powder; the whole decorated, in the evening, with flowers, vegetables, etc., and crowned with a plume of ostrich feathers; the feathers surviving for Court wear down to modern times (Fig. 3).

Footwear

Pointed shoes with narrow heels and large buckles were the mode.

Feminine fashions, 1794–1810

The war, starting in 1793, appeared to originate a change in woman's dress which was, in fact, a stage further in that simplification which had already begun. Silk became extremely expensive and woollen cloth was needed for uniforms, whereas Indian cotton textiles were available and cheap.

Consequently white dresses of muslin, cambric and calico became the mode even in winter and

were worn by all classes. The signs of class distinction, at least by day, almost disappeared, and the cruder forms of sex-appeal became universal. The general aim was to look as naked as possible.

The open robe with petticoat still persisted but was being gradually displaced by the round gown (a closed dress later known as a 'frock').

The round gown was at first constructed with the upper part of its front made as a pinned-up flap which could be let down so that the gown could be put on over the head; after 1800 a simpler construction began to come into favour, with a back opening fastened by lacing or buttons.

For day wear the round gown was quite plain, but for evening a half-length 'open robe' or else a sleeveless 'vest' of richer material could be worn over the gown.

In 1806 the 'chemise dress', the neck closed by a draw-string and edged with a frill, closely resembled the undergarment of that name.

Throughout this period the very high waistline (Fig. 4) accentuated after 1800 by short corsets, emphasized the bosom, especially when the top of the dress was cut as low as possible. 'What delicate mind can view with unconcern the *nudes* we meet everywhere? . . . the bosom shamefully exposed, and far more, the ankle' (1806).

The classical form of dress with flowing train gradually abated; by 1803 a single flounce or tucks appeared round the hem, as the skirt, becoming tubular, was shortened to ankle-length.

By 1807 the hem was being embroidered or vandyked, and the skirt slightly gored so that its shape became a narrow isosceles triangle sustained over petticoats.

The classical features had practically disappeared, as in that year the Spanish slashed sleeve was in fact a symptom of gothic revival, coupled with vandyking and scalloping of borders and elaborate embroidery over the bodice.

The phase when 'all the necks, arms, shoulders and bosoms in the kingdom were thrown open to the eye of the gazer' was over; it had been found difficult to look distinguished when multitudes of bodies much alike were exhibited in dresses much alike.

By 1810 the ancient principle of illusion and the subtle charm of class distinction recovered their sway as irresistible lures.

Accessory garments

The spencer was a short-waisted, skirtless jacket with long sleeves worn over the dress out of doors.

The shawl, originating in the 1780's, became highly fashionable in the 'nineties and beyond, the small Norwich silk shawls being especially so; the 'pine pattern' started its long career in the 'nineties. Large silk shawls with a deep fringe and square Scotch shawls of silk and cotton with printed patterns appeared by 1800.

The pelisse of cambric or muslin, with long sleeves, and the fronts hanging down to the knees, and Josephs (long tunics with loose sleeves) together with cloaks of various lengths were for

Fig. 4. London Dress, May 1799.

outdoor wear. Shoes were flat and pointed, with thin soles, the toe becoming rounded and a slight heel added by 1810.

The hair was 'dressed in the Grecian taste' with light curls in front becoming 'cropped in full curls' by 1808. In the early years of the century wigs were often worn over cropped hair by the 'dashers of the haut ton'.

Headgear

For day, mob caps of a large size covered the head. For evening, the half-handkerchief flat on the crown or the cornet cap with a cone-point behind; for more dressy occasions, the turban.

For outdoor wear an immense variety of hats and bonnets appeared, especially after 1800; all possible shapes and sizes of every implication except the demure, came and went, and small veils were often worn with them.

Both hair and hat attempted to reflect in spirit the events of the war; Egyptian modes in 1805 and 1806, military helmets, Spanish touches during the Peninsular campaign, a Trafalgar turban in 1806 . . .

Materials

Although simple muslins, cambrics and calico sufficed for a few years after war had broken out, smuggled silks soon re-asserted their appeal and Italian sarcenet, satins, velvet and lace became increasingly in demand, especially for evening wear, after 1800. As the dress had no pockets, handbags ('ridicules') were carried. All through the war facial make-up was lavish, especially in the years of classical 'simplicity' when artificial bosoms of wax or wool provoked *The Times* to exclaim, in 1799: 'The fashion of *false bosoms* has at least this utility; that it compels our fashionable fair to wear *something*.'

The most singular feature of the costume in these war years was that though we were fighting against revolutionary France, Englishwomen affected a 'democratic' simplicity of dress imitating more or less the French spirit of equality, of which the logical expression is nudity. Hence the lament of *The Chester Chronicle* in 1799: 'There is so little to be concealed at present that there is scarcely room for any fashion at all!'

Tail-piece from T. Bewick's *A History of British Birds*, Vol. 1, 1797.

Portrait Miniatures

Portrait Miniatures

JONATHAN MAYNE

IT is usual to regard the period of the maturity of Sir Joshua Reynolds as the golden age of British portraiture in oils, and until recently it was equally usual to consider the contemporary school of miniaturists as representing the highest peak of achievement which that art was to reach in this country. If a change of taste and an increase of knowledge during the last twenty years or so have between them done much to modify this somewhat naïvely 'progressive' view, it would be foolish to deny however that in the hands of its finest exponents – Meyer, Cosway, Smart, Engleheart, for example – the later Georgian miniature offers a dazzling spectacle. As Mr Carl Winter has pointed out in a lecture [1] on the subject, 'it must finally be said that, tempting as it is to generalize about the character and tendency of eighteenth-century miniature painting, no other period produced actual works of outstanding individual quality in such large numbers. If one could assemble all the excellent miniatures of the period, without regard to the names of their authors or their subjects, they would prove a difficult obstacle to belief in the theory of decline' (a theory which has sometimes been put forward in direct opposition to the previously held belief in the gradual and steady progress of the art from humble Tudor beginnings to its apogee in the Age of Cosway).

But it is better, no doubt, to cease from fruitless and invidious comparisons between one age and another, and to content oneself with saying that the Late Georgian period, which is the subject of the present essay, saw the last of several great flowerings of the British Miniaturist's art. It saw the full exploitation of the possibilities of the use of transparent water-colour on ivory, and, before its close, the onset of that attempt to rival oil-paint in a suggestion of permanence and solidity which, when a little later it was combined with the anti-linear influence of the first developments of photography, was responsible for the final debasement and virtual eclipse of the art.

Jeremiah Meyer

Our period may conveniently be held to start with an exhibition – that of the Society of Artists, which opened in London in April 1760 and was the first ever to be held in England at which the works of living artists were presented to the public. In the following year a secessionist group, The Free Society of Artists, initiated its series of annual exhibitions, and these were followed in 1769 by the first exhibition of the newly founded Royal Academy. The first miniaturist whom we have to consider here was in fact an exhibitor with the Society of Artists from the beginning, and furthermore he was the only miniaturist pure and simple among the foundation-members of the Royal Academy. This was Jeremiah Meyer, R.A. (Pl. 69A, B), who, though born at Tübingen in Germany in 1735, had lived in England since the age of about fourteen and later became a naturalized citizen. In his early twenties he received

[1] 'The British School of Miniature Portrait Painters', Annual Lecture on Aspects of Art, Henriette Hertz Trust of the British Academy, 1948 (London, Geoffrey Cumberlege), p. 16.

instruction in enamel portraiture from Christian Friedrich Zincke, who also was of German birth, though long since permanently settled in England. Meyer continued to paint enamels throughout his career – indeed his first exhibit with the Society of Artists was in this medium – but it is as a technical innovator in water-colour on ivory that his great accomplishment and historical importance lies. Although ivory, in distinction to vellum, had been adopted by miniaturists abroad and in this country from the early years of the eighteenth century (Rosalba Carriera is generally credited with its earliest use), it is nevertheless true to say that for a long time its possibilities had been neglected, or at least unexplored. That is to say that for the first sixty or so years of the century miniaturists had painted more or less thickly on the surface of the ivory, so that its characteristic glow and sparkle had been to a large extent obscured. Although in his earliest works Meyer followed the practice of his senior contemporaries, from the early 1770's, when his existing miniatures become more numerous, we begin to see emerging those qualities which, when further developed by Cosway and others, constitute the special glory of the late eighteenth-century miniature – qualities of freedom and elegance in drawing, delicacy in colour, and above all luminosity. To some extent these qualities are interdependent; a controlled freedom of drawing (helped by an increase in the physical size of the miniature which is noticeable in the 1770's), when combined with an evanescent delicacy of colour, allows the brilliance of the thin ivory to make its full effect. Meyer's mature style, as shown for example in his portrait of an unknown lady reproduced here, is essentially linear. If it is difficult to appreciate this satisfactorily in a reproduction, the treatment of the sitter's hair nevertheless betrays it to an evident degree; an original miniature by Meyer when studied under a glass reveals in fact a whole surface built up not of stippling but of an infinity of fine lines crossing and recrossing one another at more or less acute angles. A sketch-book in the Victoria and Albert Museum, which was previously attributed to Hoppner but has now been convincingly restored to Meyer by Mr Graham Reynolds,[2] demonstrates this fact even more clearly.

Meyer's career was one of official as well as artistic distinction. Before his election to the Royal Academy he had already received a gold medal from the Society of Arts and had been appointed miniature painter to the Queen and painter in enamel and miniature to the King. He exhibited at the Royal Academy from 1769 until 1783, when he retired from practice. He died in 1789.

Richard Crosse

Richard Crosse (1742–1810), only a few years younger than Meyer, deserves to be considered next for stylistic no less than chronological reasons. As in the work of Meyer, there is a strong linear element in his painting, and like Meyer he enjoyed a new freedom of style which contrasts markedly with the work of his immediate forerunners. In his idiosyncratic system of colouring, however, the resemblance ends. Richard Crosse's miniatures have a tendency to be dominated by a bluish-green tone which, as Mr. Reynolds [3] has pointed out, suggests an affinity with the earlier portraits of Reynolds. While this particularity renders Crosse's miniatures comparatively easy to identify, it can sometimes become an unattractive trait, especially when it invades the complexions of his sitters. Apart however from this general stylistic criticism, and apart from an occasional hint of sentimentality in his work, Crosse was a miniaturist of consistent accomplishment. His drawing was distinguished, and his feeling for character, particularly in his male sitters, was perhaps more acute than that of Meyer.

Unlike the majority of artists working at this time, Richard Crosse (Pl. 69c, D) came from a family of landed gentry, living near Cullompton in Devonshire. It is not known with whom he studied – indeed he is said to have been largely self-taught – but by the end of the 1770's he is shown by his record-book (which is now in the library of the Victoria and Albert Museum) to

[2] In his *English Portrait Miniatures*, London, A. & C. Black, 1952, p. 136.

[3] Graham Reynolds, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

A

B

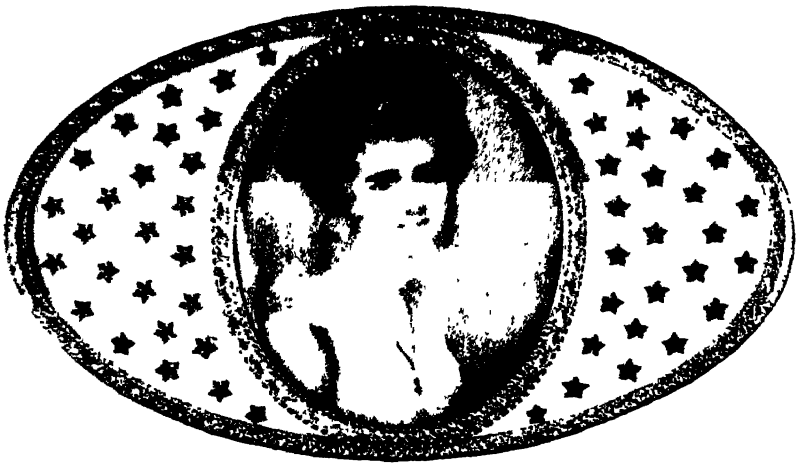
C

D

(A) JEREMIAH MEYER, R.A. (1735–89). An unknown Lady. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*
(B) JEREMIAH MEYER, R.A. Thomas Frankland, aged 24 in 1775. *Louis Clarke Collection.*
(C) RICHARD CROSSE (1742–1810). An Officer. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*
(D) RICHARD CROSSE. An unknown Lady. *Private Collection.*

A

B



C

(A) RICHARD COSWAY, R.A. (1742 ?–1821). Anne, Countess Winterton. *Bernard Falk Collection.*
(B) RICHARD COSWAY, R.A. The Duke of Wellington, dated 1808. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*
(C) RICHARD COSWAY, R.A. Mrs Lowther, in the lid of an ivory and gold snuffbox. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*

A

B

C

D

(A) RICHARD COSWAY, R.A. Philip James de Loutherbourg, R.A. *Minto Wilson Collection.*
(B) JOHN SMART (1742 ?–1811). An unknown Lady, dated 1779 *Victoria and Albert Museum.*
(C) JOHN SMART. An unknown Girl, dated 1781. *Private Collection.*
(D) JOHN SMART. Self portrait, dated 1797. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*

A

B

C

D

(A) GEORGE ENGLEHEART (1750–1829). An unknown Lady. *Victoria and Albert Museum*
(B) GEORGE ENGLEHEART. Mrs Gillespie. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*
(C) GEORGE ENGLEHEART. Mr George P. Barclay, dated 1807. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*
(D) JOSEPH SAUNDERS (worked 1772–1808). An unknown Lady. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*

A

B

C

D

(A) Ozias Humphry, R.A. (1742–1810). An unknown Lady. *H. E. Backer Collection.*
(B) Ozias Humphry, R.A. An unknown Lady. *H. E. Backer Collection.*
(C) William Wood (1768 ?–1809). An unknown Man. *H. E. Backer Collection.*
(D) John Barry (worked 1784–1827). An unknown Man. *Private Collection.*

A

B

C

(A) ANDREW PLIMER (1763–1837). An unknown Man. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*
(B) ANDREW PLIMER. An unknown Lady. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*
(C) SAMUEL SHELLEY (1750 ?–1808). An unknown Lady and two Children. *H E. Backer Collection.*

PLATE 74

GEORGE CHINNERY, R.H.A. (1774–1852). Mrs Robert Sherson, dated 1803. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*

A

B

C

D

(A) CHARLES ROBERTSON (1760–1821). The Hon. Thomas St Lawrence, D.D., Bishop of Cork and Ross. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*
(B) ANDREW ROBERTSON (1777–1845). The Duchess of Breadalbane, dated 1810. *Private Collection.*
(C) JOHN COX DILLMAN ENGLEHEART (1784–1862). An unknown Lady, dated 1809. *V. and A. Museum.*
(D) JOHN COMERFORD (1770 ?–1832). Possibly Mr Charles Farran, dated 1805. *V. and A. Museum.*

have been a prolific worker. A few years later his production began to decline, and, although he did not die until 1810, he seems to have given up practice entirely by the end of the century. Little of detail is recorded concerning his biography; he is known, however, to have been born a deaf-mute, and to have spent his last years in the care of a cousin who was a prebend of Wells. He remained a bachelor throughout his life, having in 1778 fallen deeply in love with his cousin's sister, a Miss Sarah Cobley, who was already at that time engaged to Benjamin Haydon. She married Haydon in 1782, and Benjamin Robert Haydon, a son of the marriage, relates in his *Memoirs* the affecting story of a last reunion between his mother and Crosse, the day before her death and three years before his. The account is too long to be quoted here, but it is to be recommended as bringing before us in a touchingly sympathetic manner the figure of a miniaturist who otherwise is hardly known to us except through his works.

Richard Cosway

The next two miniaturists to be considered – two indeed of the best-known in the history of the art – were born within a year or so of one another. The exact birth-date of neither is recorded, but available evidence suggests that Richard Cosway (Pls. 70A, B, C, 71A) was born in 1742 (at all events he was baptized in November of that year) and John Smart in 1742 or 1743 (probably not in 1741, as has often been maintained). About Cosway there is a considerable amount of biographical material. He was the son of the headmaster of Blundell's School, Tiverton, and showed early ability as a painter; indeed before he was twelve years old he was sent to London to study with Thomas Hudson, who had been Reynolds' master. Cosway's first ambitions were in fact in the direction of full-scale portraiture in oils, and his first exhibit, at the Society of Artists in 1760, was a portrait in that medium of the drawing-master Shipley. In the following year he began to exhibit miniatures, but he continued also to paint and to show oil-paintings throughout the greater part of his career. On the foundation of the Royal Academy Cosway enrolled as a student (at the age of 27), becoming in 1770 an Associate, and in the following year a full, Academician. Ten years later he married a Miss Maria Hadfield, who, though of Irish parentage, had been born and brought up in Italy, where she had herself studied painting and had had (according to her own testimony) the advantage of associating with some of the leading artists of the time. It was in the years immediately succeeding his marriage that Cosway's real artistic and social fame began. Already well known for the foppishness of his appearance and behaviour, as is evidenced by two satirical prints published as early as 1772, it was about 1783 that he seems first to have attracted the favour and patronage of the Prince of Wales; very soon he became the centre of an almost notoriously gay social life. Living first in Berkeley Street, and then, from 1784 until 1791, in the central part of Schomberg House in Pall Mall, the Cosways entertained lavishly, holding a regular *salon* at which many of the social notabilities of the time were frequent visitors. The patronage of the Prince, which is said to have been bestowed as a result of a miniature-portrait which Cosway painted of Mrs Fitzherbert, furthered his professional success to a degree unreached by any of his contemporaries, and the nature of his particular talent was such that it flourished in the atmosphere of this success as at no other period of his life.

It was about this time that Cosway took to signing his miniatures, on the back, with the somewhat bombastic Latin inscription which is familiar to all students – and forgers – of his work: 'R^{dus} Cosway RA Primarius Pictor Serenissimi Walliae Principis Pinxit.' The earliest recorded example of this signature bears the date 1787, but there is evidence that he was already using some such form in the previous year, to which date should probably be referred his appointment (if he was ever officially appointed) as First Miniature Painter to the Prince.

In 1791 the Cosways moved to Stratford Place, Oxford Street, where they were to remain until 1821, the year of Cosway's death. During this last period of his life, Cosway's character and circumstances appear to have gradually altered. Like

others of his contemporaries he became interested in the occult and the esoteric (Blake indeed was not alone in claiming to have had ghostly sitters in his studio); but, what was worse for his material prosperity, he became sympathetic towards the revolutionary ideals which were current at the time. According to the testimony of his cousin, quoted in Cunningham's *Life*, 'he was one of those sanguine men who perceived in the French Revolution the dawn of an empire of reason and taste in which genius and virtue alone would be worshipped'. It was only to be supposed that this would affect his relationship with the Prince, and we find in fact that little by little court patronage began to decline. Cosway retained a fashionable clientèle, however, and though his style became gradually less flamboyant and more austere, he does not seem to have lacked for sitters.

As a painter Cosway can trace his origins to the same tradition as Meyer, though, as we have seen, he was some seven years younger than that artist. Like Meyer, he is known to have studied the technique of enamel in his youth, and like Meyer's, his earliest work is not altogether unconventional for its time. Although there is a paucity of dated 'documents' for his development into the great Court miniaturist of the 'eighties and 'nineties, it seems likely that it was Meyer's example that pointed the way to his full understanding of the use of transparent water-colour. Such miniatures as can be referred to the 'seventies already show a partial realization of these possibilities (see, for example, Pl. 70A), but it was not until a little later that he came to make a regular practice of that elegant and dashing economy of pigment which is such a feature of his best Court work. Again like that of Meyer, Cosway's fully developed style was essentially linear, though whereas Meyer's use of line tended towards angularity, Cosway's was more gently rhythmic and on the whole somewhat broader. His palette was severely limited; a pale blue sometimes predominates, especially in the background which he often painted in the manner of a sky; apart from this, he virtually confined himself to greys, sepias, blacks, carnations and pale yellow, 'green', as Dr Williamson pointed out in his book on the artist, 'being an exceptional colour, very seldom made use of'. At the same time he began to adopt certain distortions in his drawing; enlarged eyes and gracefully lengthened necks become in fact a kind of hallmark of his middle period—mannerisms which were taken over by many of his followers and imitators.

Reference has already been made to an austerity which begins to be noticeable in Cosway's miniatures from about 1805. This coincides in time with the cessation of the Prince's patronage, and takes the form of a more penetrating, psychological type of portraiture, careless of artificial elegance and depending for its realization on colours which are almost muddy. Some of the artist's most telling works are the product of this period; one may reasonably regret the wonderfully controlled flamboyance of the earlier works, those perfect counterparts of the late eighteenth-century age of elegance, but it is at least arguable that many of these austerer works of the artist's old age, which have not unreasonably been compared to the last works of Frans Hals, have a peculiar merit of their own which is in its own way as valuable.

John Smart

John Smart (Pl. 71B, C, D), who was Cosway's almost exact contemporary, was in some ways his almost exact antithesis. Described in an eighteenth-century *Memoir* [4] as 'a man of the most vulgar manners, grossly sensual and greedy of money to an extreme', he nevertheless lived a quiet, industrious life, and painted a series of miniatures whose almost unwavering excellence of quality is perhaps only surprising for the fact that he nowhere shows the slightest awareness of the contemporary developments of the art at the hands of Meyer, Crosse or Cosway. If Meyer be held to mark the point in the history of the eighteenth-century miniature at which a decided innovation took place, Smart may with equal justice be regarded as the conservative follower of Luke Sullivan, Gervase Spencer, and other members of the mid eighteenth-century group which Mr Rey-

[4] *Memoirs of Thomas Jones*, published as the Walpole Society's Volume No. 32 (1946–8), p. 73.

nolds, in his book already cited, has named 'The Modest School'. Very little is known of Smart's early life; he must, however, have been a precocious child, for he won second prize (to Cosway's first) at the first competition of the Society of Arts, which was held in 1755 and was open to boys and girls under fourteen years of age; he continued to win prizes in succeeding years, and in 1758 was placed first, to Cosway's second.

The earliest extant miniature by Smart is signed and dated 1760, and already it exemplifies the fundamental characteristics of the artist's mature style to a degree unparalleled by the early works of any of the artists so far considered. The reason for this is fairly evident, and has already been implied above. For Smart had no stylistic conflicts, and but few stylistic developments ahead of him. The manner which he inherited from his predecessors and early made his own was to be the manner in which he worked throughout his life. It is possible to confirm this with considerable accuracy, for it was Smart's almost invariable habit to sign and date his miniatures from the very outset of his career, and thus a fairly complete index of his year-to-year achievement is available for study.

The most important episode in his life, perhaps, was his visit in 1785 to India, where he remained for ten years. There he met with considerable success, being appointed for the duration of his stay as miniature-painter to Muhammed Ali, Nawab of Arcot, and his family. Several of his miniatures of that native prince are known, as are other portraits of Indians. He also worked extensively for the English community in India. The miniatures of this period can be easily distinguished by the fact that Smart added a Roman I after the date which followed his signature.

On his return to London he began in 1797 to exhibit at the Royal Academy, having previously remained faithful to the Society of Artists, and indeed having borne office in that organization. Thereafter he continued to exhibit at Somerset House until his death in 1811, and his later works show little or no falling off in his powers.

Smart's style is one of the most easily recognizable of all the late eighteenth-century masters; his enamel-like finish is indeed all but unique in a period which saw a sudden loosening and broadening of brushwork and a development of calligraphy such as we have already noted in some of his predecessors and contemporaries. Nor did Smart adopt the exclusive use of transparent colour in the manner of Cosway or Meyer. His colour is bright and fairly thickly applied, and it is perhaps for this reason that his miniatures remain today to a remarkable degree unfaded. His imagination and vision were indeed limited; he seldom seems to have aspired beyond the immediately pretty, and where that prettiness does not already exist in his sitters, he tends to present us with a somewhat prosaic image. Much subtlety of characterization was beyond him, and even the faintly ironical smile in his self-portrait of 1797 (Pl. 71D) is an unusual feature of animation to be found in his work. When this much has been said in criticism, it is possible to endorse the generally held view of the outstanding attractiveness of his miniatures. Given a child or a pretty girl as his sitter, he is inimitable; his painting of costume and accessories is of the greatest delicacy; and even when the physical size of miniatures began further to increase in the 'eighties and 'nineties of the century, he still contrived to preserve that jewel-like quality of surface which, on a slightly smaller scale, had been his special prerogative from the outset of his career.

George Engleheart

George Engleheart (Pl. 72A, B, C), the third of the three artists who together seem to form a kind of triumvirate over the late Georgian miniature, was born in 1750, some eight years after Cosway and Smart. His father, a plaster modeller, was of German origin, and his early studies were carried out first with George Barret, RA, the landscape painter, and then in Reynolds' studio. It was not until 1775 that he set up in practice on his own as a miniaturist. From that date until 1813, when he retired to the country, he led a life of phenomenal industry; his record-books, like those of Crosse and of certain others of his contemporaries, have been preserved, and from these we can gain an idea of his activity. In the years between 1775 and

1813 he painted nearly five thousand miniatures – an average of well over a hundred a year. It is small wonder that his works are so frequently met with. Even after he retired from regular practice he continued to paint on occasions, his last work being dated 1829, the year of his death at the age of seventy-eight.

Engleheart's style followed the general pattern of his times. His earlier miniatures, belonging to his first five years or so of practice, are modest in scale and restrained in idiom. From about 1780 a greater assurance becomes evident, and certain characteristic mannerisms begin to be developed – for example, a brittle and crimped manner of drawing hair, a use of opaque white in the outlining of drapery which almost gives an impression of starch, and an enlargement and intensification of the eyes. Nevertheless, in spite of a certain automatic elegance which is sometimes to be held against them, the miniatures painted by Engleheart during this central part of his career contain a surprisingly high proportion of authentic masterpieces. If, as Mr Winter [5] has suggested, 'the animal that lurks in the breast even of civilized man seems to have been seen too often by Engleheart rather as a complacent tabby asleep in a milliner's box', it must nevertheless be conceded that the animal, even if unduly domestic, was regularly of the highest possible breeding and distinction.

Engleheart's final phase may be distinguished in his work from the mid-1790's until the end of his career. His miniatures of this period are frequently of larger size than before, and the scale of his forms is also correspondingly greater. Although it is hard to detect a diminution in his technical powers at this time, there does seem nevertheless to be a slight decrease of intensity, and this is perhaps to be attributed to a defect of imagination rather than to any other single cause. Engleheart's style had been formed under the influence of an aristocratic ideal; if it could effectively enough accommodate itself to the growing bourgeois ethos of the early nineteenth century, it could only do so at a certain sacrifice. Engleheart was perfectly capable of providing the more prosaic and realistic images which the new patronage required; the problem however of bringing an equal emotional pressure to bear on this new type of work was perhaps more than he was able, or inclined, to solve, and thus there seems often a certain lack of vitality about the miniatures of this last period.

[5] Carl Winter, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

Some lesser miniaturists

In an essay of the present scope it is impossible to do more than draw the main outlines of the period, and when, as in the late Georgian epoch, there were probably more miniaturists at work than at any other time, before or since, in our history, it is inevitable that a considerable injustice will be done to some of the secondary figures. Some of these indeed it is already unjust to characterize in this way. Ozias Humphry, R.A. (1742–1810) (Pl. 73A, B), for example, was an artist of great distinction, and is often considered on the same level as Cosway, Smart and Engleheart. He is one of the exceptional artists of the period whose work in certain of its technical respects, provides a small-scale counterpart of the full-scale portraiture of the time – in this case, that of Reynolds. Andrew Plimer (1763–1837) (Pl. 74A, B) has also been greatly admired in modern times, but of recent years his popularity would seem to have been on the wane. He is said to have been a servant to Cosway in the early 1780's, and it is true that his style owes something to that master. But his mannered and repetitive elegance often tends to superficiality. Other artists, who though correctly described as 'minor', yet maintained a remarkably high standard of workmanship, were such men as Samuel Shelley (1750?–1808) (Pl. 74C), Joseph Saunders (exhibited 1772–1808) (Pl. 72D), Richard Collins (1755?–1831), Charles Robertson (1760–1821) (Pl. 76A), John Barry (worked 1784–1827) (Pl. 73D), George Chinnery (1774–1852) (Pl. 75), J. T. Barber Beaumont (1774–1841) – but the number could easily be doubled or trebled without admitting any perceptible lowering of standard.

We have already noticed, when discussing Engleheart, a slight change that began to char-

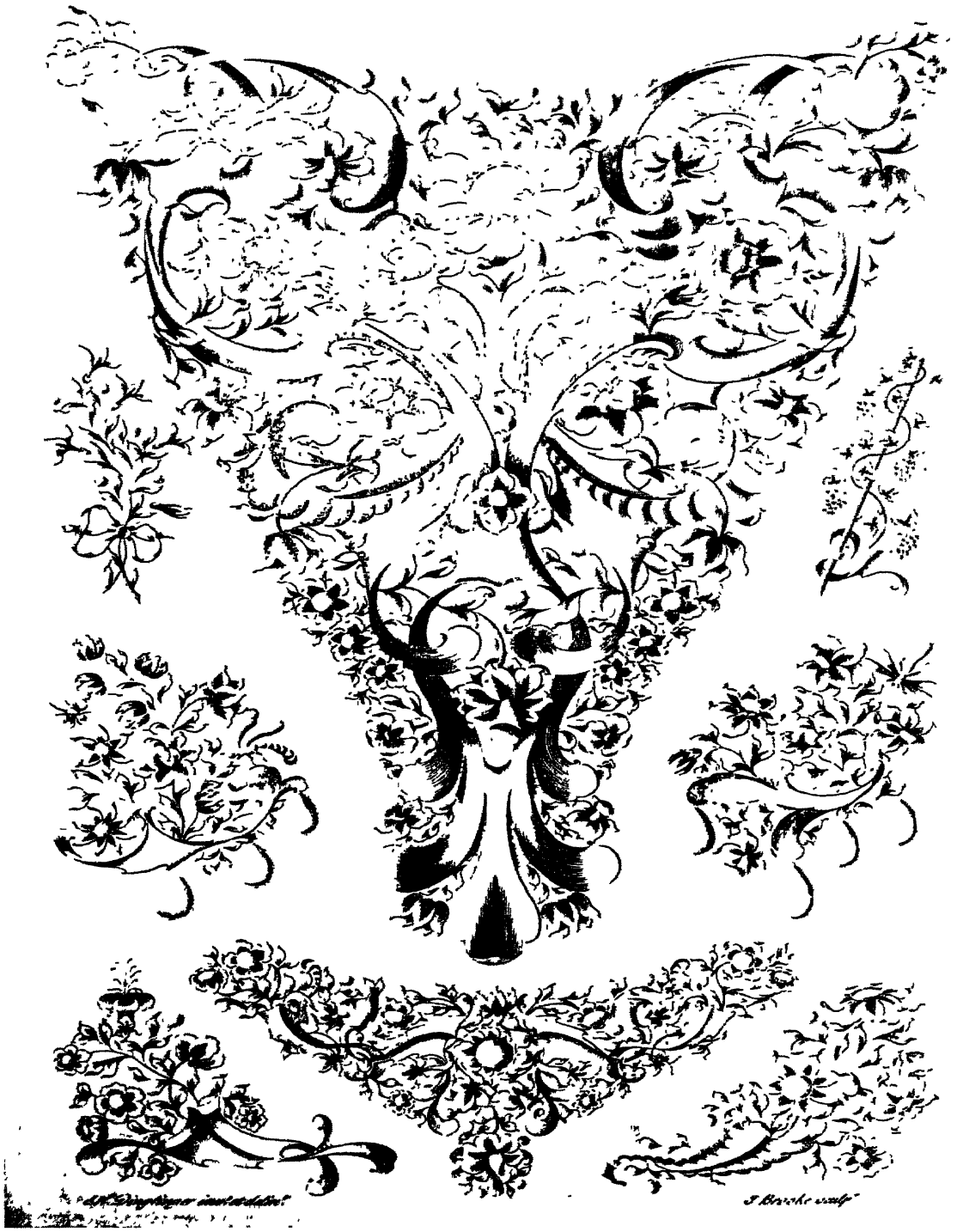
acterize the patronage of the early nineteenth century, and in concluding this brief survey it is necessary to return for a moment to this point. For it was this cause above all, perhaps, that helped to bring about a perceptible modification in the miniature-portrait itself. The aristocratic ideal, as best realized by Cosway and Engleheart, was already losing its impetus, and a new bourgeois naturalism was beginning to take its place. At the same time the miniaturists, like the contemporary water-colourists, were seeking to enhance the status of their art; one can detect symptoms of this in the still increasing size of their works, and even more in an increased solidity of facture. Miniatures were ceasing to be elegant objects of adornment – pendants, bracelets or brooches – as in some sense they had been since Holbein's time, and were already becoming small pictures to be framed and hung on walls or stood on tables.

Andrew Robertson

It is usual to refer this development to the conscious innovations of the Scottish miniaturist, Andrew Robertson (Pl. 76B). Born in Aberdeen in 1777, Robertson came to London in 1801. He had already worked for some years in the North, but his real historical début occurred when shortly after his arrival in London he made a large miniature copy (measuring some 8 inches by 7) of Van Dyck's portrait of Cornelius van der Geest (then believed to represent Govartius). When this was shown to Cosway he could not at first believe that it was a water-colour miniature at all, it was so heavily painted in imitation of oil: and when Shee, the future P.R.A., saw it, he realized that here was the new type of miniature that he had been looking for; in the words of a contemporary writer, 'Cosway and Shelley he [Shee] allowed had their merit, but a person is wanted . . . to paint large miniatures in the style of that picture of Govartius'. The new style gained rapid favour, and Robertson was soon appointed miniature-painter to the Duke of Sussex; a year or two later he spent some time at Windsor painting portraits of the Royal princesses.

As befits a man who was deliberately seeking to make something that would challenge the oil-portrait on its own ground, Robertson was a slow and conscientious worker. We know, for example, that one portrait took him 22½ hours of sittings, as well as half as much time again spent on background and accessories – 'a week's hard labour', as he described it. But in spite of this, Robertson's work at its best has a lively and sometimes even a spontaneous quality that comes as a surprise to us when we think only of his unusually painstaking methods. He had a strong gift for characterization and a sense of drama which together saved his portraits from being merely accurate inventories of faces. The revolution in style which he initiated was indeed made necessary by the general movement of events in the general world of taste; but he was something more than just a peg on which events hung themselves, and the same may be said of the best of his contemporaries and followers, such as A. E. Chalon (1780–1860) and Sir W. C. Ross, R.A. (1794–1860), who reacted to the same set of external stimuli and furthered the same development in the art. The fact that, wise after the event, we can see only too clearly that these developments were leading towards a not too distant degradation should not blind us to a real merit in the works of those artists who came to maturity in the early years of the nineteenth century.

Jewellery



Page from S. Dinglinger's book of designs for jewellery, published in London in 1751. It shows designs for a stomacher, a corsage ornament and six brooches.

PLATE 77

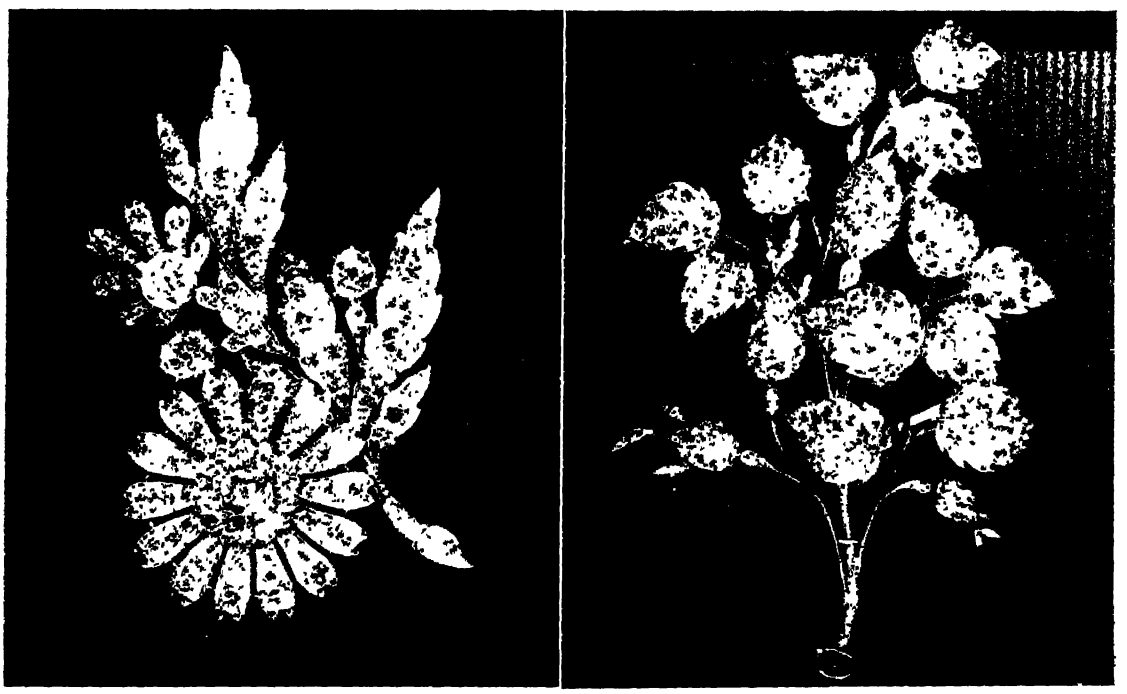
(A) Necklace with pendant, garnets set in silver-gilt, about 1760–80. (*left*) Pendant, gold set with garnets and diamonds, late eighteenth century. (*right*) Pendant, gold set with garnets and pearls and an enamelled miniature of Queen Charlotte, late eighteenth century.

(B) Breast ornament in form of bouquet of flowers, enamelled gold set with diamonds, about 1770–80.

Note: Fashion in eighteenth century jewellery was to such an extent international that it is extremely difficult to determine its country of origin. Not all the pieces illustrated are of English manufacture but they do nevertheless represent the types worn in England between 1760 and 1810. Those most likely to be of actual English manufacture are shown on Plates 78A and C, 79B and C, and 80A. All the pieces illustrated are in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

(C) Spray brooch, gold and enamelled silver set with rubies and diamonds, about 1760–70.

(A) Necklace, silver set with emeralds, rubies, foiled crystals, and topazes, about 1760–80



(B) and (C) Two spray brooches, silver set with diamonds, early nineteenth century.

(C) Necklace with pendant and pair of earrings, silver set with paste, end of eighteenth century.

(A) Pair of clasps, enamelled gold enclosing ivory plaques with trophies in hair-work set with diamond sparks, end of eighteenth century

(B) Frame for a miniature with chain for wearing as a pendant at the waist, early nineteenth century.

PLATE 80

Jewellery

JOHN HAYWARD

During the eighteenth century fashion in jewellery developed slowly. A jewel made in the early years of the century would not, for instance, have looked greatly out of place in the coronation year of George III. This conservatism in jewellery fashion persisted until the nineteenth century, when increasing use of cheaper materials and the larger number of persons wearing jewels gave rise to more frequent change of fashion. The earlier conservatism was doubtless due in part to the high cost of re-setting precious stones, but also to the fact that the wearing of jewellery was mainly confined to the most formal occasions, when novelties in fashion would have been out of place.

The period from 1760 to 1810 can, as far as jewellery is concerned, be divided conveniently at about 1790, the break being occasioned by the French Revolution. Though this event had no immediate large-scale social repercussions in England, the new fashions in dress which accompanied the Directoire, the First Consulate and the Empire régimes in Paris were soon transmitted to and eagerly adopted in London. These fashions called for types of jewellery more in keeping with the bourgeois background of the French Revolution and greatly different from those worn during the earlier part of the century.

Decline in the importance of setting

The year 1760, which, in other respects, marks the beginning of the transition from the carefree raptures of Rococo asymmetry to the elegant austerity of the neo-classical style, has no particular significance as regards the history of jewellery. The types of jewels worn in the second half of the eighteenth century had become standardized as long as a hundred years before. They had originally been devised for the ladies of the court of Louis XIV, but in the meantime a taste for lighter designs had developed. The tendency during the century had been for settings to become less obtrusive, and in fact to be suppressed as far as was technically possible. Many of the later eighteenth century jewels relied for their effect exclusively on the precious stones of which they were composed. This end was achieved by the introduction of the pavé setting, in which the precious stones were placed so close to each other that the surrounding metal, in which they were embedded, was hardly noticeable. The construction of such settings called for a degree of skill on the part of the jeweller that had not hitherto been attained. In dealing with the earlier part of our period, we are much less well served with sources of information than might be expected. Very little important jewellery of the eighteenth century survives in the condition in which it was originally made; nearly all was re-set in the nineteenth century. It is a peculiar fact that though the brilliant cut, which did so much to bring out the latent beauties of the diamond, was introduced early in the eighteenth century, the majority of surviving eighteenth century jewellery is set not with brilliant but with rose-cut stones. The reason for this apparent anomaly is that the more valuable brilliants were almost invariably reset later, while the old-fashioned rose-diamonds were not considered worth the trouble of resetting.

Cost of jewellery in the 1770's

In the ledgers of the Crown Jewellers, later known as Messrs. Garrards, for the second half of the eighteenth century, orders for resetting brilliants or roses are considerably more frequent than those for new pieces of jewellery. The only pieces which were purchased new by many of their clients, who included all the nobility and gentry of the country, were inexpensive objects such as finger or ear-rings. An exception is the brilliant necklace purchased by the Earl of Rosebery for £800 18*s.* 6*d.*, or the 'double-row'd brilliant necklace' which cost £114 in 1775. Many of the prices seem quite moderate: thus two rose diamond pins cost twelve guineas; a brilliant cluster ring nine guineas; a fine brilliant diamond brooch with inside locket and gold back £17 10*s.*; a pair of pearl ear-rings three guineas; an amethyst motto ring set round with brilliants £8 10*s.* All these prices date from the 1770's but are valid for most of the century, as the value of money remained stable.

Apart from surviving jewels, the most likely source of information would seem to be contemporary portraits of ladies of fashion. It is, however, surprising how few of the English portraits of the second half of the eighteenth century, other than those of members of the Royal family, show the sitters wearing much jewellery. One sees an occasional brooch, more frequently a necklace of pearls, or of amber or coral beads, but no more. While portraits of ladies painted by artists at other European Courts show them wearing a great deal of jewellery, in England the enthusiasm for nature, which led to the destruction of nearly all the great formal gardens in the country, seems in portraiture to have banished jewellery from the feminine toilette. The throat and bosom of the sitter, although generously revealed to the onlooker, were customarily left unadorned and free of any adventitious aids to beauty. The contemporary attitude to the use of such accessories is reflected in Sir Joshua Reynold's *Discourses on Painting*. In his Fourth Discourse, he condemns excessive attention to details of materials, while in his Seventh Discourse he deprecates the use of modern dress in portraiture on the grounds that its excessive familiarity detracted from the dignity of the sitter.

Jewellery in fashion plates

Another source of information as to jewellery fashions is to be found in the columns of the *Lady's Magazine*, which covers most of our period, the first volume having appeared in 1770. This magazine was, however, primarily concerned with fashions in dress and references to accessories such as jewellery are only incidental. The early years provide a meagre crop of information: in March 1774 we read that small drop ear-rings are worn, by July of the same year they seem to be out of fashion again, though 'fine blond lace in puffs drawn through diamond rings or fastened with a diamond buckle' is being worn. In August 1780 we read of 'pearls round the neck in falls' a feature often seen in contemporary portraits. It is not, unfortunately, until after the turn of the century that the *Lady's Magazine* is more explicit about jewellery fashions.

Pattern books of jewellery

It is not then to contemporary portraits, nor to fashion literature, nor to surviving examples that we must turn in order to get an idea of the capacities of the English jeweller in the second half of the eighteenth century. There remains to be mentioned the pattern books published by enterprising jewellers as guides to their less gifted colleagues in the trade. A comprehensive picture of the type of jewellery that was made at the beginning of our period can in fact be obtained from a work published in 1751 entitled *A new book of designs for Jewellers Work by Sebastian Henry Dinglinger. Jeweller. London.* Although his Christian names appear to have been anglicized, it is probable that this Dinglinger was related, perhaps a son or younger brother, to the famous Johann Melchior Dinglinger, Court Jeweller to Augustus the Strong, King of Poland and Elector of Saxony. Dinglinger's book illustrates the whole range of jewellery of the period. As would be expected at the time, the designs show a definite Rococo tendency, though applied to the familiar

eighteenth century forms. They illustrate girandole ear-rings, Sevigné bows, large bouquets, corsage ornaments, stomachers, ornaments for sewing on the dress, little moths, flies and butterflies intended as hair ornaments, and finally chatelaines, buckles and fan-mounts. In spite of their rococo feeling, the designs are mainly symmetrical; what is mostly expressive of their period is the naturalistic treatment of the floral motifs that form the basis of so many of them. The earlier designs were considerably more formal in character: the girandole, consisting of a large circular stone above with three pear-shaped pendants, known as briolettes, below: the Sevigné, an openwork bow from which hung one or more pendants, often ending in a cross: the aigrette, a hair ornament of a design somewhat similar to an ear of barley. By the 1760's, though the same basic forms were still in use, the effect had been lightened, firstly by the predominantly floral designs, and secondly by the use of semi-precious stones to give more colour variety. The heavy Sevigné was quite transformed when it was composed of light leaf-like members set with many coloured stones. Not only did the jewellers of the third quarter of the century make increasing use of floral designs but they rendered them, as far as their material permitted, in a naturalistic manner. Their most pleasing achievements in this style were the bouquets intended for corsage ornaments. Examples are to be seen in Dinglinger's pattern book, but extremely few have survived: that shown in Pl. 77 is not of English origin, and is perhaps a little more magnificent than would usually have been found in England at the time. Such bouquets of coloured stones are referred to in Colman and Garrick's play *The Clandestine Marriage*, published in 1766, where the Bride remarks 'I have a bouquet to come home tomorrow, made up of diamonds and rubies and emeralds and topazes and amethysts – jewels of all colours, green, red, blue, yellow, intermixt – the prettiest thing you ever saw in your life.' While these bouquets were undoubtedly the most handsome productions in this *genre*, coloured stones in floral designs were also applied to rings and smaller brooches.

There are numerous descriptions of naturalistic floral ornaments composed of jeweller's work in the catalogue of James Cox's Museum, a collection of clocks, automata and ornaments advertised for sale by lottery in 1774. The first items in this collection were a clock and a pair of vases valued at £5,000 which, it was claimed in the characteristic puffing style of the eighteenth-century advertising copy writer, formed 'the richest set of imperial ornaments ever made, and well deserving a place in the finest palace of the earth'. One of the vases is described: 'In the centre of the rock (forming the base) is fixt a most splendid bunch of flowers, copied with the utmost exactness from nature, in all its infinite variety of tints and forms, with different colour'd gems. The flowers are all in motion, being fixed to springs of tempered gold, which gives them vibration, as if they were blown by the wind; innumerable flies and insects, all of jeweller's work, hover upon and amongst the flowers . . . the different flowers have their different leaves, made of the finest transparent green, and amidst the flowers and leaves, splendid stars, of various magnitudes, are introduced . . . The stars are of jeweller's work, adding greatly to the elegance and richness of these very capital ornaments and have been the labour of many years.'

Diamond floral sprays

Of all the types of jewellery of this period that which has most commonly survived is the brooch composed of a spray of flowers and leaves of diamonds set in silver. The reason for their survival is that they remained fashionable during the nineteenth century and escaped the usual fate of being broken up and reset. It is not at first sight easy to distinguish between eighteenth- and nineteenth-century floral sprays of this type; but the presence of a clear setting, that is with the backs of the stones left open so that light may be transmitted through them, signifies a date not earlier than the end of the eighteenth century. Previously stones had been set in collets that were closed at the back; this method had the advantage from the point of view of the jeweller that he could use stones of inferior colour, and strengthen their effect by

providing them with a background of coloured foil which reflected the light, but was concealed from view by the closed collet at the back of the stone. When stones were set in open collets, it was no longer possible to conceal their deficiencies. For women of rank and great wealth a number of flower sprays were put together to compose a stomacher or corsage ornament. The most familiar example is to be seen in Allan Ramsay's well-known coronation portrait of Queen Charlotte, painted about 1762. The Queen is shown wearing a stomacher of almost triangular form which covers the whole front of her dress from the neck down to the low waist; it is composed entirely of floral motifs of silver set with diamonds. Queen Charlotte's diamonds were justly famous; the *Lady's Magazine* gives us a description of them in the issue of June 1800: 'Her Majesty was magnificently attired in a lilac crape petticoat . . . with five superb diamond bands, composed of collets, and fifteen large brilliant roses and stars, at equal distances on the bands; these bands were terminated at the bottom with four very magnificent bows and tassels of diamonds and large pearls, from which were also suspended festoons of beautiful pearls in wreaths; over the left side flowed two corners of lilac crape edged with diamond chains and pearls, with pearl tassels at the bottom, and fastened at the pocket holes with a superb diamond and pearl bow; all the diamond and pearl bands and chains being displayed to great advantage by being placed on wreaths of purple jessamine leaves. Her Majesty wore a superb diamond stomacher and necklace and a beautiful diamond bouquet; her head-dress was chiefly composed of a magnificent diamond bandeau, with brilliant drops of immense value; in short, her Majesty's whole dress was never decorated with such profusion of diamonds and pearls, and in point of value greatly surpassed anything of the sort ever displayed in this or any other country.' It is probable that Queen Charlotte, who could ignore the new fashions in jewellery that were coming over from Paris, was still wearing the same stomacher that may be seen in the Ramsay portrait of her. The impression given by this enthusiastic description is that of a lady dressed according to pre-Revolution fashion. The claim that the Queen had never before worn so many diamonds is not likely to be correct. It was the peculiar custom in the eighteenth century for the coronation robes and regalia to be adorned with as many diamonds as could be obtained on loan from the London jewellers. At the coronation of George III and Charlotte, the bill for the hire of diamonds from the Crown Jewellers, Messrs John Wakelin and Edward Parker, amounted to £15,024. The diamonds borrowed were valued at the immense sum of £375,600.

During the third quarter of the eighteenth century, elaborate towering head-dresses were worn which gave considerable scope for a display of jewellery. In English portraits, we rarely see anything more elaborate than a rope of pearls worked into the coiffure, sometimes accompanied by one or more pendants. The aigrette, worn at the side of the head, had a long period of popularity until it was replaced in the early nineteenth century by the tiara, a form that accorded better with the classical revival dress of the Empire. These aigrettes consisted of a delicately constructed bouquet of precious stones in a very light setting. The individual fronds or stalks were often mounted on springs so that the slightest move set them vibrating, thus bringing out the full brilliance of the diamonds with which they were mounted.

No mention has hitherto been made of paste jewels, but in fact, there was a considerable production of paste, and many of the most attractive jewels surviving from the earlier part of our period are of paste. The designs for paste jewels did not, however, differ in any way from those used for precious stones, and they do not, therefore, call for separate treatment.

The fashion columns in the *Lady's Magazine* of the last decade of the century give us several hints as to the changes that were taking place. Thus in June 1790 we read of a necklace of two rows of fine filigree work, the lower hanging below the waist; in April 1794 'the fashionable earrings were in double rings of fillagree gold mixed with brilliants, pearls and enamel, the necklaces to suit': in June 1798 enamelled chains and neck-

laces of diamonds set in collets and linked together were suitable for wear at Court, while strings of garnets were worn on ordinary occasions. In 1802, necklaces of pearl, amber and coral were still being worn, but we read the following somewhat astringent comment: 'Trinkets in the shape of harps fastened by gold chains round the neck; a diamond crescent is worn on the bosom, indicative, we imagine, of chastity; the horn of the lamp of Eve cannot be supposed to refer to the happy husbands of our modern belles.'

The Grecian Revival

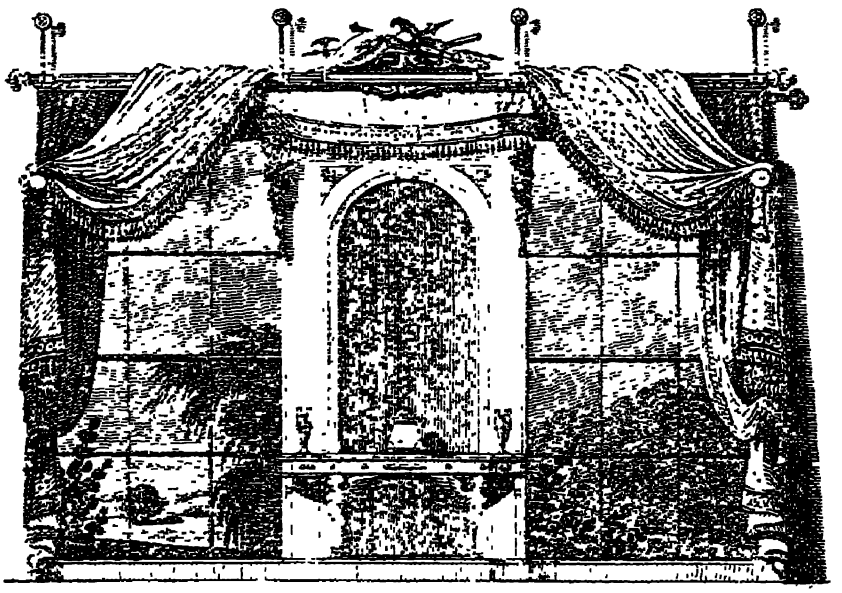
The colour plates which accompany these issues of the *Lady's Magazine* show that the Grecian Revival fashions from Paris had been wholeheartedly adopted in London, and it is against such a background that the jewellery of the latter part of our period must be envisaged. It might even be said that the early nineteenth century saw the birth of what is now known as costume jewellery, for the cameo set tiaras, necklaces and bracelets that were worn at the time were consciously designed to match the fashions in dress that had been imported from Paris. A noticeable trend at the end of the century was the general use of less expensive materials, and not only by the bourgeoisie. Besides true cameos cut in hardstone, shell and even lava cameos were popular. Lowest of all in degree were the paste cameos of moulded glass, which were the invention of the Scot, James Tassie. Other alternatives to precious stones were the medallions with classical subjects turned out by Wedgwood at Burslem, and enamelled plaques from South Staffordshire.

Cheap jewellery in the form of pastes had, however, been known for centuries and the desire for less expensive jewellery was not the decisive factor in the introduction of the new fashions. The great archaeological discoveries of the second half of the eighteenth century profoundly influenced fashion; and the practice of wearing Roman intaglios or cameos or reproductions thereof on head, arms and neck was simply a manifestation of the fashion-consciousness of society at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Besides the introduction of the tiara in place of the aigrette, the early nineteenth century saw one other important innovation in jewellery fashion. This was the adoption of the parure of matched pieces, consisting of necklace, ear-rings, pendant, bracelet and sometimes a tiara as well, all *en suite*. Such parures might be of immense value, composed of finely matched stones, but inexpensive versions were also produced in semi-precious stones mounted in stamped gold or even pinchbeck settings.

Mourning jewellery

A feature of the latter part of the eighteenth century was the fashion for mourning jewellery. The considerable quantity that survives, especially in the form of mourning rings, would seem to suggest that it must have been the most popular form of jewellery, but this high survival rate is due to the combination of sentimental appeal and a low intrinsic value. Mourning jewellery was by no means a new idea; it had long been the custom for a testator to leave money for the provision of mourning rings for the chief mourners at his funeral. That the expansion in the fashion for such jewellery dates from after 1760 is demonstrated by the neo-classical flavour of the subjects treated. As a rule oval frames were favoured, of varying size according to the ultimate destination of the jewel, i.e. ring, pendant, locket or bracelet slide. These frames were set with enamels or miniature paintings of funerary urns on plinths by which stood inconsolable widows under the shadow of weeping willow trees. The back of the frame was filled with an appropriate design, often a monogram of the deceased's initials executed in a lock of the latter's own hair. Such jewellery was usually inexpensive; a thin gold frame was set with, at the most, seed-pearl or diamond sparks. The extreme sentimentality of this jewellery was out of key with early nineteenth century taste, but to pursue the history of jewellery through the ever increasing tempo of early nineteenth-century changes of fashion would take us beyond the limits of the particular period which is the subject of this book.



PALL MALL

61

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NB: Elegant Specimens of made up Drapery for various purposes may be seen at the Warehouse as above

Corner of S.t Charles S.t Midd.x Hosp.l

An early nineteenth-century engraved tradesman's card.

Glass

Glass

R. J. CHARLESTON

The history of glass is not limited by political boundaries, and the accession of George III was accompanied by no change in glass-style. 'About 1760', however, is a significant dating in eighteenth-century English glass, since it represents the apogee of the rococo phase of that art, as of others. But to see this climax in its true light, it is necessary to cast back and survey what went before.

George Ravenscroft's invention of glass-of-lead about 1675 was an epoch-making discovery. Before that date, lightness had been unhesitatingly accepted as the hallmark of the best glass. After that date, a fresh set of glass values supervened and gradually made themselves felt throughout the civilized world; until, by the end of the eighteenth century, 'English crystal' was synonymous with what was most desirable in glass, just as 'Venice glass' had been for the preceding century. The immediate consequence of Ravenscroft's revolutionary discovery, however, was that by the increasing use of lead-oxide, a glass-'metal' was produced which was unsuitable for working by the old Venetian-derived methods. The best results of this new English style are the so-called 'baluster' glasses of about 1700, in which simplicity and solidity are combined with a harmonious relationship of the parts to the whole. Thereafter the general movement of taste towards lighter forms led to a heightening of the stem and a thinning of its component knops and balusters. This general movement was in the case of glass accentuated by the imposition in 1745/6 of an Excise levied on the material by weight. It now behoved the glass-maker to be as sparing of his metal as he could. To compensate for loss of form, he turned to ornament.

Decoration of glass: stem-twists

Some writers on glass have inferred that the movement towards ornament during the second quarter of the eighteenth century was solely caused by the Excise of 1745/6. The truth is that glass followed in the wake of larger movements. The rococo, which began to win general acceptance in England about 1750, was primarily a decorative movement, in which surface embellishment was nearly everything. In this it contrasted with the baroque, which moved in depth, with massive sculptured forms and dramatic contrasts of light and shade – virtues, incidentally, of the best 'baluster' glasses.

The first of these adventitious forms of ornament was the air-twist stem, in which threads of air are twisted spirally to form a silvery coil within the thickness of the stem (Pl. 82c). Beginning tentatively in the first decades of the century, this technique reached its perfection in the 'thirties and 'forties, only to dwindle in significance after the mid-century.

From the air-twists, which are no more than drawn-out bubbles of air, it was but a short step to the enamel-twist, which is a series of opaque-white rods embedded in a clear matrix, drawn out thin and twisted. Although enamel-twists came in before 1750, their hey-day was the third quarter of the century; a further excise in 1777, which extended the tax to enamel-glass, giving the death-blow to what was already probably a dying fashion.

Towards the end of this period, glasses were occasionally made with twists incorporating coloured as well as opaque-white threads (Pl. 82A, E).

Engraving, enamelling and gilding

The forms of decoration already described were all carried out in the glass-house while the material was still hot and ductile. Of more significance was the ornamentation executed in various types of decorating-establishment on the blank glasses as received from the glass-house. Of these forms of ornament, cutting is by far the most important and will be dealt with at length later. Closely akin to it is the art of engraving. In both the surface of the glass is broken into by means of an abrasive suspended in a liquid and fed on to the point of contact between it and a rotating wheel. The engraver's wheel is usually made of copper, in a great variety of shapes and profiles. After the rough cuts have been made, they may be polished at will by a series of wheels of softer materials used with abrasives of a progressively finer texture. Engraving was introduced to England by German craftsmen, but never aspired in this country to the heights which it often attained in its German and Bohemian homelands. English engraving is usually restricted to simple borders, armorial devices and mottoes, artless sprays of flowers, and an occasional unambitious figure subject. Although they are seldom remarkable as works of art, English engraved glasses are often of considerable interest for their subject-matter. Particularly is this so where they are the vehicles for the propaganda of Jacobites and Hanoverians, at whose meetings the drinking of toasts from suitably engraved glasses played an important part (Pl. 82C). Perhaps the most charming of all the engraved English rococo glasses, however, are those which adapt the *chinoiseries* of Pillement or Boucher within the limitations of the executant's technique (Pl. 82D), or conjure up tiny vignettes of English rural life and scenery, much in the spirit of Bewick's tail-pieces.

This same spirit informs some of the best enamelling of the period. Nor is this altogether surprising, for Bewick himself was apprenticed in the family which was responsible for the best of it. This was the Beilby family at Newcastle-on-Tyne, of whom William and Mary were entrusted with the work on glass. The best of their enamelling is done in monochrome white on drinking-glasses and decanters, although their ambitious armorial goblets in full heraldic colours are splendid things. Their simpler pieces are decorated with no more than a scroll of the fruiting vine or a flower-spray, but on the more elaborate glasses appear little vignettes of rural life and sport (Pl. 82A), classical ruins and obelisks in the taste of the time, or fictitious coats-of-arms painted in colours but enclosed in the most delicate of rococo scrollwork painted in white.

Enamelling of another sort, but often of comparable quality, was done on opaque-white glass made to imitate porcelain. Here, naturally enough, the ornamentation too simulated that of porcelain, mainly in sprays and sprigs of flowers, often accompanied by the little insects first familiarized on European porcelain by the factory at Meissen. This opaque-white glass, not being suitable for tea- or coffee-services, was employed mainly for ornamental vases and beakers, tea-caddies, candlesticks and the like. Contrary to popular belief, it was not made only, or even mainly, in Bristol; but also in London, Newcastle, Warrington and elsewhere. Some of it was almost certainly decorated in the South Staffordshire area, in which enamelling on metal had been practised since well before the middle of the eighteenth century. Here too were probably decorated the small facetted scent- and smelling-bottles, *étuis*, etc., of blue, green or purple glass, with their tiny scenes of birds, flying and swimming, or their inch-high shepherdesses with hay-rakes. These were usually enamelled and gilt, but sometimes gilt only, and this type of decoration became popular on blue glass in the same period which saw the 'mazarine blue' grounds on Chelsea porcelain decorated with birds in thick rich gold. The bases of candelabra were often decorated in this way, while some blue fingerbowls and stands with gilt key-fret borders are among the few examples of glass certainly attributable to Bristol, being signed by the maker (Fig. 1). Such finger-bowls, however, must have enjoyed a general vogue at the time, for a Ger-

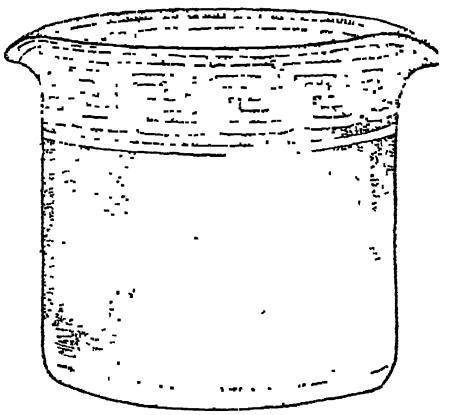


Fig. 1. Blue glass finger-bowl with gilt decoration. Signed 'I. Jacobs Bristol'. Probably made at Jacobs' 'Non-Such Flint Glass Manufactory' in Bristol, about 1805. Ht. 3⅞ in. Victoria and Albert Museum.

man visitor remarks: 'The blue glass bowls used for rinsing hands and mouth in at the end are quite delightful' (1786). Smollett, however, writing in his *Travels* (1766), thought quite differently about this habit: 'I know of no custom more beastly than that of using water-glasses in which polite company spirt and squirt and spue the filthy scourings of their gums.' Colourless glass too was occasionally decorated with gilding. This work is usually unpretentious, and consists of no more than a stem of vine-leaves and grapes, or the like.

Cut-glass

Of all the methods of decorating glass used in the eighteenth century, however, cutting is by far the most important. The tools of cutting are large wheels of stone or iron, on to which a mixture of sand and water plays at the point of contact with the glass. The edge of the wheel may be flat, rounded or bevelled, producing cuts of different section; and the glass may be offered to the wheel in the plane of its rotation or obliquely, producing symmetrical or unsymmetrical cuts. From the varieties of cut offered by these different combinations is built up a geometrical tessellated pattern. Cut-glass was the supreme manifestation of English glass in the eighteenth century, for two reasons: first, because cutting was a decorative technique intimately related to the form of the vessel on which it was used; and secondly, because English lead-glass was ideally suited to it, both because it was soft and therefore easily worked, and because its high refractive index brought out the maximum play of light.

Cutting, like engraving, came to England from the German lands, where the stems of engraved wine-glasses were frequently facetted. The first cut glasses in England were certainly made during the first quarter of the eighteenth century, but it was the second quarter which saw its real development. Cutting was at first limited to parts of a glass which offered a thickness of metal to the wheel. Rims of bowl-forms (such as sweetmeat-glasses) were notched or scalloped, whilst cruet bottles and the stems of wine-glasses were cut into all-over patterns of flat or slightly hollowed hexagons or diamonds (Fig. 2), obtained by overlapping facets cut on the flat or rounded wheel. A more elaborate style of cutting was evolved during the third quarter of the century, when oblique cuts producing lunate forms were combined with the motifs already described in a variety of ways, resulting in remarkably rich effects (Fig. 3). Amongst the motifs thrown up by this style of cutting was a triangle or a diamond in low relief. When the neo-classical movement began to make itself felt in glass, it had the effect of sobering down the rich cutting-style of the 1760's and 1770's. Amongst the cut motives which remained in favour, however, were the vertical flute, with its elegant slimming effect, and the relief-diamond.

The course of development of cut-glass was affected within a very short span of years by the impact of two economic measures. The first of these was the severe increase in 1777 of the tax on glass by weight: the second was the freeing of Irish trade in 1780. Ireland was now free to export glass anywhere in the world, and her glass-makers were unhampered by the Excise. The effects were twofold. In the first place, many English glassmen migrated to Ireland: in the second, the development of style in cutting was unhampered in Ireland by considerations of economy. It was therefore naturally the Irish glass-houses which took up and developed those

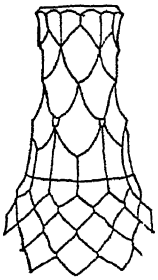


Fig. 2. Neck of a decanter showing fluting, scale-pattern and flat diamonds, about 1760–70 (after Thorpe).

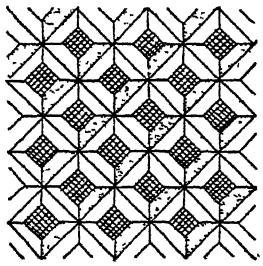


Fig. 4. Field of strawberry diamonds, early nineteenth century (after Thorpe).

Fig. 5. 'Herring-bone' fringe, early nineteenth century (after Thorpe).

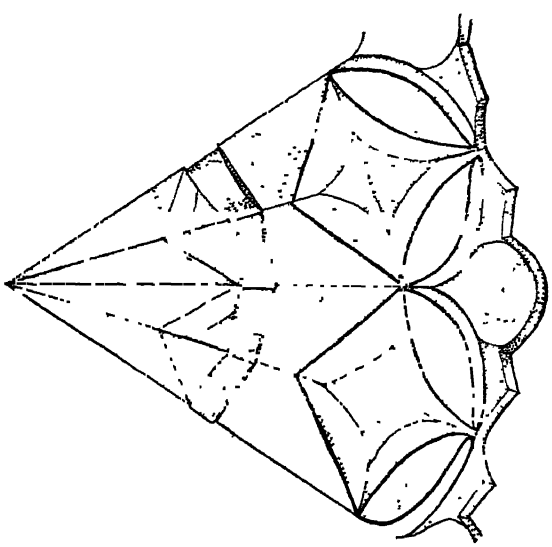


Fig. 3. Section of a dish showing the full development of English sliced cutting, about 1775.

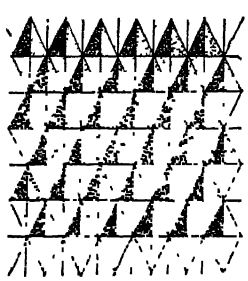


Fig. 6. Field of relief diamonds, late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (after Thorpe).

motifs which required the greatest thickness of metal – the pillared flute (in relief), the deep horizontal groove, and, most important, the relief-diamond (latterly made smaller and sharper), with its developments, the hob-nail diamond and the strawberry diamond. These, arranged overall in relatively large fields, and often combined with fluting, became the dominant motifs of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century cutting (Figs. 4, 5, 6). Their uniformity called for great precision in cutting, but led to aesthetic monotony and a boring profusion of decoration, seen at its worst towards 1850.

The uses of glass

Glass in our period was used in almost as many ways as it is today. Then as now, however, glass for drinking took pride of place, and among drinking-glasses the wine-glass was king (Pl. 82B–E). On it and its concomitant decanter were lavished the most up-to-date forms of decoration. There was not, however, with one or two insignificant exceptions, a differentiation between the shapes and sizes of glasses used for different types of wine. This was a product of nineteenth-century connoisseurship. The wine-glass was simply a glass of about one-third to one-half gill in capacity, of varying bowl-shape. Somewhat smaller than the wine-glasses, but often on a proportionately higher stem, was the glass used for drams or cordials (Pl. 82A) – and small wonder, when one reads some of the recipes of the time:

A very rich Cherry Cordial

'Take a Stone Pot that has a Broad Bottom and a narrow Top, and lay a layer of Black Cherries and a Layer of very fine powdered Sugar; do this 'till your pot is full: Measure your Pot and to every Gallon it holds, put a quarter of a pint of Spirit of Wine. You are to pick your Cherries clean from Soil and Stalks, but not wash them. When you have thus filled your Pot, stop it with a Cork, and tie first a Bladder, then a Leather over it; and if you fear it is not close enough, pitch it down close and bury it deep in the Earth six months or longer; then strain it out and keep it close stopped for your Use. 'Twill revive, when all other cordials fail.'

A further type of glass of small capacity, with a tallish narrow bowl, is usually termed a 'ratafia' glass, but ratafia was little different from other cordials, and a good case has been made out for these glasses being in fact champagne-glasses. Champagne, then as now, was an expensive drink (in 1762 it was offered at 8*s*. a bottle, as contrasted with 6*s*. for Burgundy or 5*s*. for Claret), and was apparently notable for its strength. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, somewhat earlier, wrote:

> They sigh not from their hearts, but from their brain
> Vapours of vanity and strong Champaign.

That the champagne-glass offered one of the exceptions to the rule of non-differentiation enunciated above is proved by the fact that, in bills rendered by the glass-cutter Thomas Betts in the 1750's, 'champagnes' are singled out by contrast with mere 'wines'. There is good reason why these champagne-glasses should have been small, and the almost cylindrical shape is, from the wine-taster's point of view, better for champagne-drinking than the modern shallow hemisphere – a form which probably did not come in before the second quarter of the nineteenth century. The eighteenth-century glasses of this general shape are certainly almost always sweetmeat-glasses.

Set apart from the form of the ordinary wine-glass was the 'firing-glass' or the toast-master's glass. The latter might be a trumpet-shaped glass on a slender stem, or a glass with a deceptive capacity obtained by the use of abnormally thick metal. The 'firing-glass' was usually trumpet-shaped, short-stemmed, and equipped with a thick disc-foot able to withstand hard banging on the table, in an age when drinking was of the order described in Dyott's *Diary*: 'The Prince (afterwards George IV) took the chair himself and ordered me to be his Vice. We had a very good dinner and he sent wine of his own, the very best Claret I ever tasted. We had the Grenadiers drawn up in front of the messroom windows to fire a volley in honour of the toasts. As soon as dinner was over he began. He did not drink himself: he always drinks Madeira. He took very good care to see everybody fill, and he gave 23 bumpers without a halt. In the course of my experience I never saw such fair drinking. When

he had finished his list of bumpers, I begged leave as Vice to give the Superior, and recommended it to the Society to stand up on our chairs with three times three, taking their time from the Vice. I think it was the most laughable sight I ever beheld to see our Governor, our General and the Commodore all so drunk they could scarce stand on the floor, hoisted up on their chairs with each a bumper in his hand; and the three times three cheers was what they were afraid to attempt for fear of falling . . . There were twenty dined; we drank sixty-three bottles of wine.'

Ale was drunk from glasses with tall tapering bowls. In high-class specimens, the bowl is frequently decorated with a hops-and-barley motif engraved, enamelled or gilt (Pl. 82F). In taverns, the glasses were plain, or at best ornamented with a wrythen mould-blown rib-pattern.

The decanter, although a late-comer to the table, was well-established by 1760. It could vary in capacity from a pint (which must surely have stood at one man's elbow and not been passed round the table) to the equivalent of twenty bottles. In 1760 two forms of decanter were current. The first was broadest at the shoulder and was usually decorated with all-over diamond-cutting (Pl. 83C). The second had a sloping shoulder (Pl. 83A), and was more frequently decorated by engraving, enamelling or gilding (often with a cartouche enclosing the name of the wine). With the coming of neo-classicism these decanters were refined by a reduction in diameter and by a smooth unbroken transition in the curve from neck to body (Pl. 83B). These elegant decanters were usually only lightly decorated. From 1775 onwards an entirely new form takes the field – a decanter with barrel-shaped body and outsplayed lip. This shape was well-suited for decoration by cutting, and was taken over by the Irish glass-houses. Towards the end of our period the disc-stopper was replaced by a mushroom-stopper, and the neck of the decanter was equipped with three horizontal rings to facilitate a grip (Fig. 7).

Spirits too were kept in decanters, frequently of coloured glass with gilt labels showing their contents. These were often square in section and could therefore easily be carried about in travelling-cases. Thus in 1784 Fogg & Son, the noted London 'chinamen' and glass-sellers, supplied Sir John Griffin with '4 Square Glass Bottles Cut All Over – 10/–'. Such bottles were often simply referred to as 'Squares'.

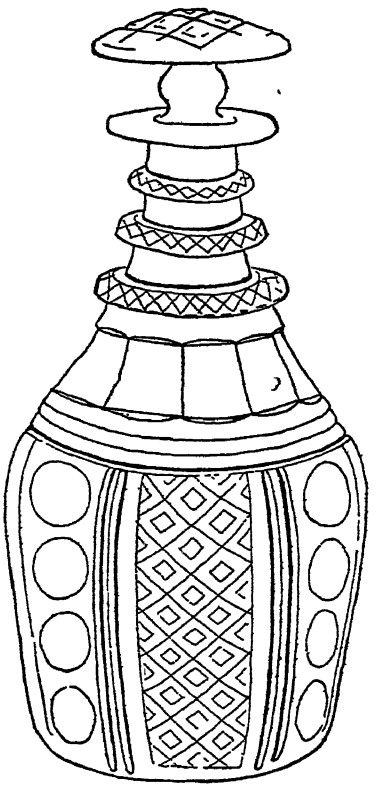


Fig. 7. Decanter and stopper, cut with panels of 'strawberry diamonds'. Early nineteenth century. Ht. 9⅛ in.

Although the service of alcohol was the most important function of glass in the eighteenth century, its use spread far beyond this. At table, cruet-bottles and sugar-casters were frequently made of glass fitted with silver caps (Pl. 83D). When the dessert-course came on, glass had a particularly important part to play, for the centre of the table was frequently taken by an imposing 'pyramid' of glass. A broad salver on a low foot formed the bottom tier of this pyramid, and on it was set another of narrower diameter but with a taller stem: and on this sometimes a third. Each tier was set round with jellies (Fig. 8) or wet and dry sweetmeats, in tall conical or low round glasses, whilst

as the crown of the whole was set a large sweetmeat glass with hemispherical bowl on a tall stem (Pl. 81). Dishes, plates and pickle-trays of scalloped and sliced cutting might also adorn the table, whilst openwork baskets wrought from glass-threads whilst still plastic might serve to hold fruit. Tea-caddies, and more rarely teapots and cups and saucers; jugs and basins, patch-boxes, *étuis* and seals, were also occasionally made in glass.

Of all the uses to which English glass was put in the eighteenth century none was more suited to its peculiar character than its employment for lighting fittings. The high powers of light-refraction possessed by English lead-crystal have already been mentioned: when cut, a prismatic effect was added to it, and when wax candles were set in cut chandeliers and candelabra, the effect must have been brilliant indeed – but of a brilliance softened by the slight darkness of the glass-material itself. The candlesticks of our period were mostly plain-shafted, with a broad domed foot and a detachable grease-pan. The shaft was usually cut in diamond facets, the foot and grease-pan scalloped and cut in accordance with the changing modes of the time.

Far more elaborate were the great cut-glass chandeliers which blazed in the reception-rooms of great houses, or in the Assembly-rooms of such cities as Bath, York or Newcastle. The glass chandelier had evolved in the first half of the eighteenth century to a form where S-shaped arms radiated from a semi-spherical cup which was itself only one of a number of spherical ornaments, usually simply cut, strung on a tall vertical shaft. In the second half of the century this basic pattern was merely elaborated. To the shaft were added canopies, scalloped at the edges and pierced for hanging drops cut in a variety of patterns; cutting became more elaborate, the candle-arms themselves being notched to add to the prismatic effect, and cut spires, themselves often topped by cut canopies, being set on the branches (Pl. 84). This was the apogee of the rococo chandelier. The first effects of neo-classicism were to be seen in the appearance of an urn-shaped member on the vertical stem, and gradually the whole chandelier began to be stripped of its more frivolous trappings. Cutting became sparser, and the medley of hanging ornaments gave way to a uniform type of brilliant-cut, usually pear-shaped, drop. These drops were often strung in swags from branch to branch and round the canopies, and the multiplication of these festoons of drops began to obscure the basic design of the chandelier. Arms, no longer readily visible, became plain, while the ornamental parts of the stem, except the canopies, lost importance. The final stage of this evolutionary process, which culminated about 1810, saw the eighteenth-century chandelier completely transformed. Below a series of drop-hung canopies, ropes of drops formed a sparkling tent, the widest part of which was an ormolu hoop, in which were set numerous short, S-shaped arms, heavily notched and terminating in richly cut candle-holders and grease-pans (Pl. 84).

The chandelier, which must have formed so striking an adjunct of the eighteenth century salon, was not, however, without its disadvantages. Lady Mary Coke, writing in 1768, remarks: '. . . I went to the Ball at eight o'clock . . . I think 'tis one of the finest Houses for an entertainment that I know, and nobody does the honours better or more agreeably than Lady Holland, yet I cant say I thought it went off well.

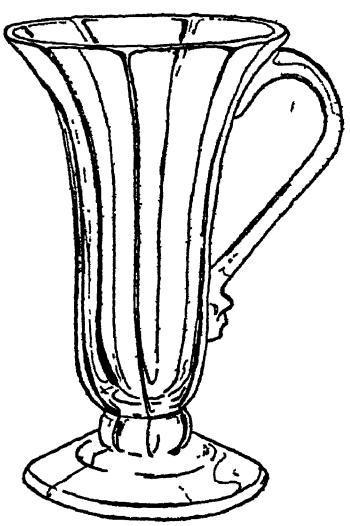


Fig. 8. Jelly-glass. Mid-eighteenth century. Ht. 4½ in.

The Dancers complained of the heat . . . A great branch Candle Stick fell down over Lady Holland, and very narrowly missed her head.'

Common glass

The glass so far described was for the most part of a luxurious character, and reserved to the houses of wealth and importance. It was made in glass-houses devoted solely to the manufacture of 'white' glass. Far more numerous, however, especially in the Bristol, Stourbridge and Newcastle areas, were the window- and bottle-houses. In the latter, enormous quantities of bottles were produced by hand, whilst in their spare time, using the fag-end of a pot of 'metal', the workmen might produce simple jugs, cream-pans and the like, to satisfy a local market (Fig. 9).

The wine-bottle in the period under consideration suffered very little mutation compared with that undergone in the previous hundred years. By the middle of the eighteenth century the previously sloping side of the wine-bottle had become vertical, and the modern bottle, capable of being binned on its side, had to all intents and purposes evolved. The eighteenth-century bottle was blown by hand and not moulded, and still bore round its neck the ribbon of glass which had originally served as an anchor for the wire fastenings of the cork. Occasionally a bottle is equipped with a seal bearing the name or arms of the owner of a cellar, or of a vintner or a College Common Room. Apart from wine- and beer-bottles, bottles were made for pickles and mustard, and cylindrical phials for apothecaries' use. Spa waters could be obtained bottled, and although those of Pyrmont and Pouhon were probably put up in the bottles of the Spa in question, others were certainly English. Thus in 1759 one Lewis Jenkins supplied,

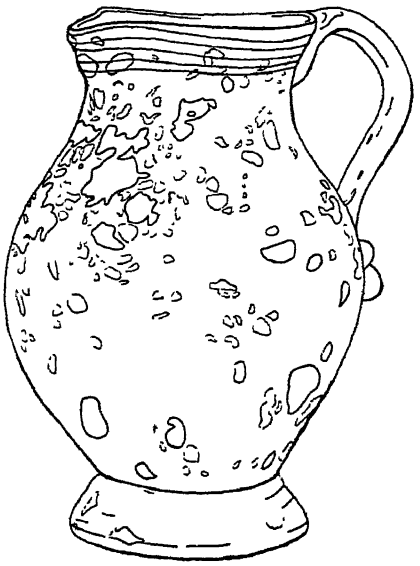
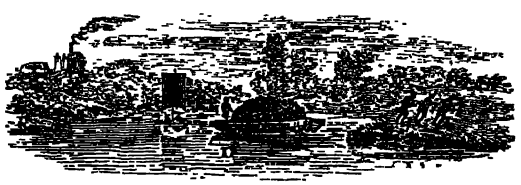


Fig. 9. Green glass jug decorated with blobs and threads of opaque-white glass. Late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. Ht. 7¾ in.

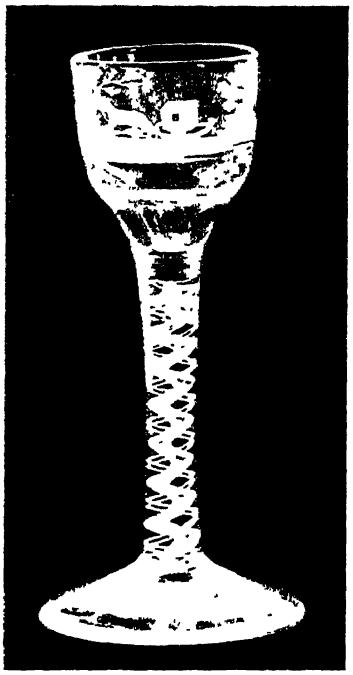
in addition to Pyrmont and Pouhon waters, 'Bristol Hot Well Water, fill'd by Smith and Woodall, at 7s. per doz.'

The standard wine-bottle of this period contained a quart, although hand-making rendered it difficult to maintain exact uniformity—so much so that a Member of Parliament, suitably enough the Member for Cork, brought in a Private Member's Bill in 1802 'that a quart bottle should hold a quart'. There were, however, also half-bottles, and even quarter-bottles; while, on the opposite side of the scale, there were Jeroboams and Rehoboams accommodating 4 and 6 bottles respectively, Methuselahs for 8 and Salmanazars for 12, and even monsters which held 28 bottles.

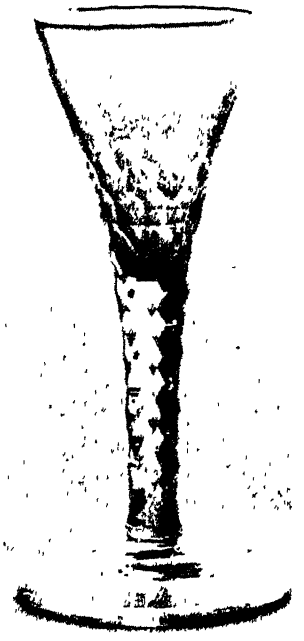


Tail-piece from T. Bewick's *A History of British Birds*, Vol. 2, 1804.

Trade-card of Maydwell and Windle, glass-sellers in the Strand, *c.* 1770.
Sir Ambrose Heal.



A



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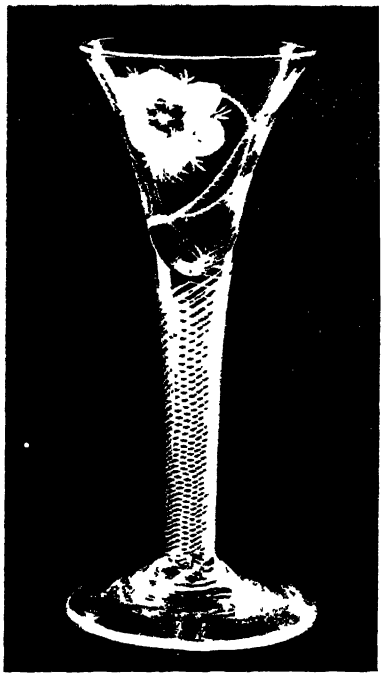
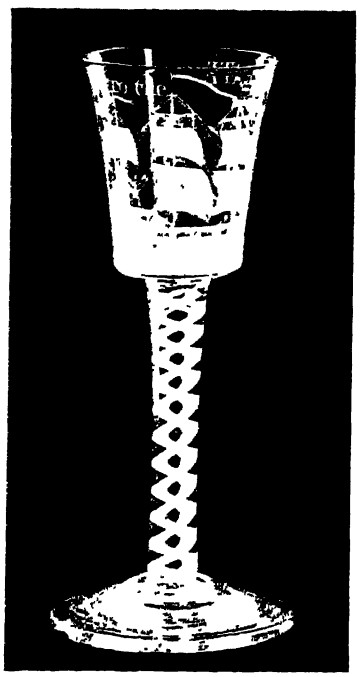


C

(A) Cordial-glass with opaque-white twist stem, the bowl enamelled in white. Probably Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Beilby), *c.* 1770. 5¼ in. (B) Wine-glass with facet-cut stem, *c.* 1760. 7¼ in. (C) Wine-glass with air-twist stem, engraved with Jacobite emblems, including the Stuart rose, *c.* 1750. 6½ in.

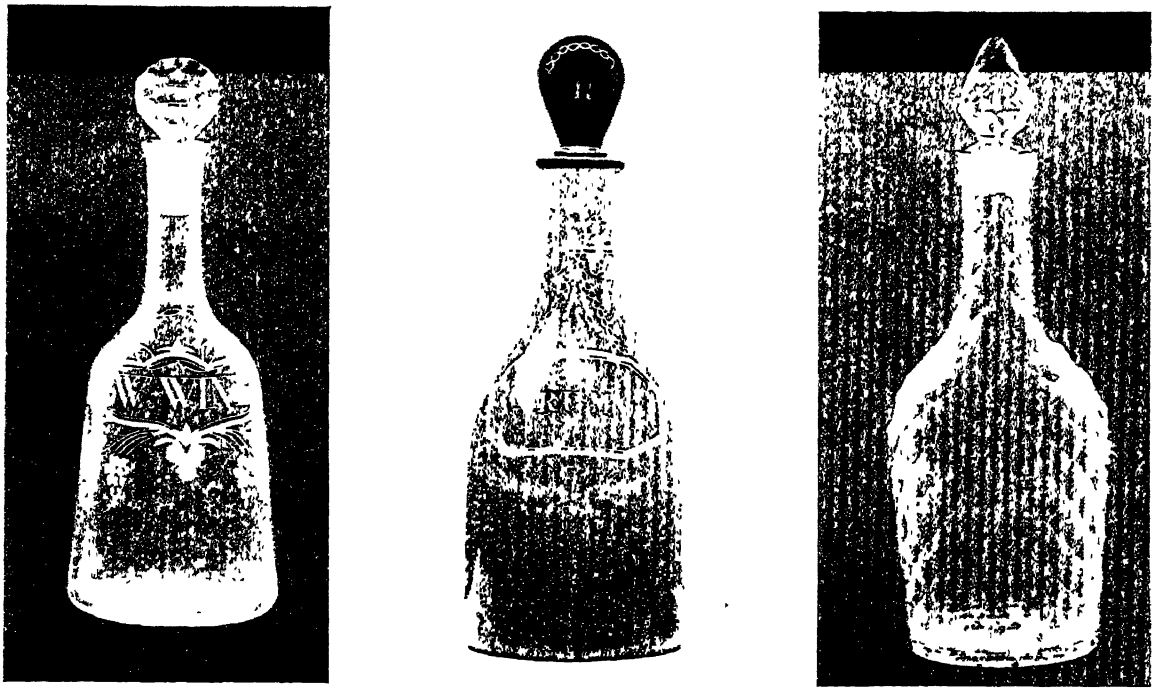
D



E

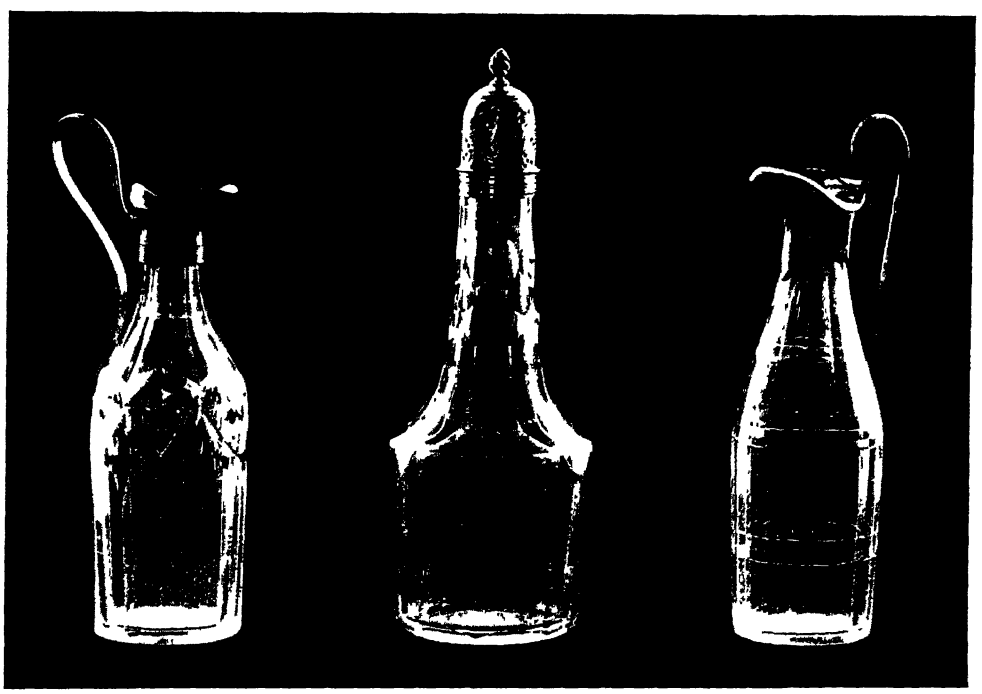
F

(D) Wine-glass engraved with *chinoiserie* subject, *c.* 1760. 9⅜ in. (E) Wine-glass with opaque-white twist stem. Engraved with representation of a frigate and inscription: 'Success to the Eagle Frigate. John Knill, Commander', *c.* 1760. 6½ in. (F) Ale-glass with faceted stem, the bowl engraved with hops and barley, *c.* 1760. 7½ in. *All Victoria and Albert Museum.*



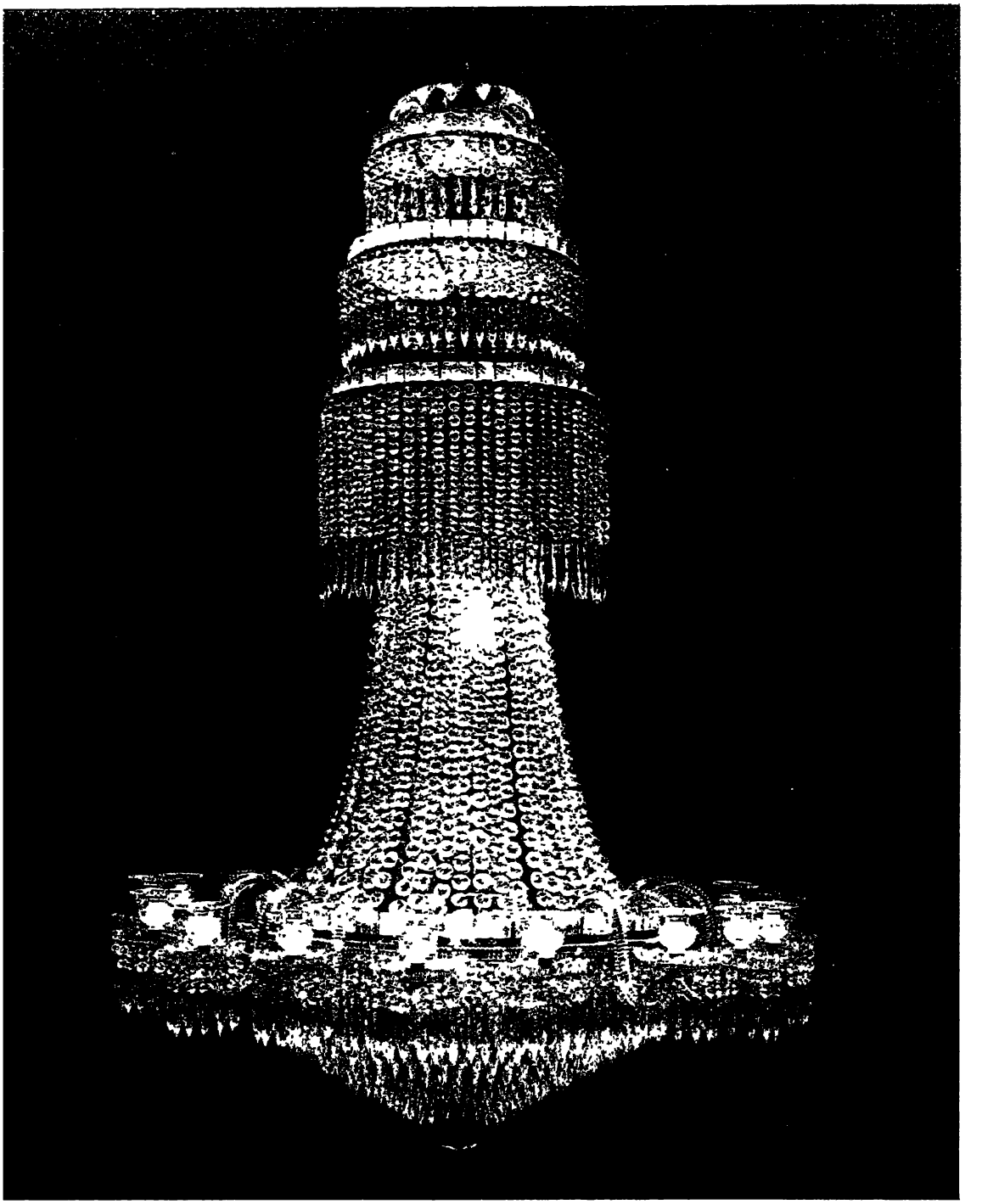
A B C

(A) Decanter for white wine, with engraved 'label' and faceted stopper, *c.* 1760. 11 in. (B) Spirit-decanter, blue glass with gilt decoration, *c* 1780. 9¾ in. (C) Decanter and stopper, cut in facets, *c.* 1760. 12 in. *All Victoria and Albert Museum.*



(D) Cruet bottles with silver or plated mounts. That on the left has the London hall-mark for 1798; centre (7⅞ in.), *c.* 1765; right, *c.* 1790. *All Victoria and Albert Museum.*

PLATE 83



Cut-glass chandelier from Wroxton Abbey, Oxfordshire, *c.* 1810. 6 ft.
Victoria and Albert Museum.

PLATE 84

Music and Musical Instruments

Music and Musical Instruments

ERIC HALFPENNY

With the death of Handel in 1759, his Italianate Baroque influence, though still powerful, began to give place to the newer 'Galant' style of the early Classical symphonists, then infiltrating from the Continent. The new style reached its apotheosis later in the century in the mature symphonies of Haydn and Mozart, and its innovators belonged to countries other than England. England's expanding economy and growing commercial wealth made her a consumer rather than a producer of masterpieces. Her contribution to the art of music in late-Georgian times was perhaps material rather than spiritual; in the manufacture of instruments and in music-printing; above all, as a cosmopolitan asylum for composers, virtuosi and craftsmen from abroad, many of whom settled here, to the permanent enrichment of our musical scene.

Pianoforte and harpsichord

The English sponsorship and development of the pianoforte after 1760 was the most important and far-reaching single event of the period. Although the instrument was invented in 1709 by Cristofori of Florence, it did not come into much prominence until the second half of the century, by which time the initiative was being taken outside of Italy. The quite sudden appearance of the instrument in England dates almost exactly from 1760. The story has often been told, how a number of German craftsmen, driven here by the Seven Years War, brought with them the *métier* of piano-building from the workshop of Gottfried Silbermann of Dresden, whose early copies of Cristofori's instrument are said to have been criticized by J. S. Bach. The earliest English printed reference to the pianoforte is contained in a London directory for 1763, where Frederic Neubaur is listed as a maker, among other things, of 'Piano-fortes'. This entry is of particular interest since Neubaur seems to have been an associate of Roger Plenius, an English harpsichord maker of great inventive talent, said by Burney to have been the first maker of a piano in this country. Plenius became a bankrupt in 1756, having beggared himself in his attempts to popularize his Lyrichord (Fig. 1), an enormously complicated keyboard instrument which produced sustained sounds from strings by means of rotating wheels, after the manner of the hurdy-gurdy. This amazing instrument passed into Neubaur's possession, and was eventually sold at Christie's with the rest of his stock-in-trade, in 1772, for the sum of fifty guineas. Its subsequent fate is unknown.

The earliest surviving English-built piano is dated 1766. This instrument, curiously enough, is quite unorthodox in having seventeen notes to the octave for the greater part of its compass, instead of the normal twelve. This idea, though not then new, was probably directly inspired by the writings of Dr Robert Smith, of Trinity College, Cambridge, who a few years before had advocated a 24-note octave in order to secure purer tuning in all the major and minor scales. It is remarkable, however, that the new type of instrument should so soon have been used as the basis for such experiments.

Johannes Zumpe, whose work it is, was a

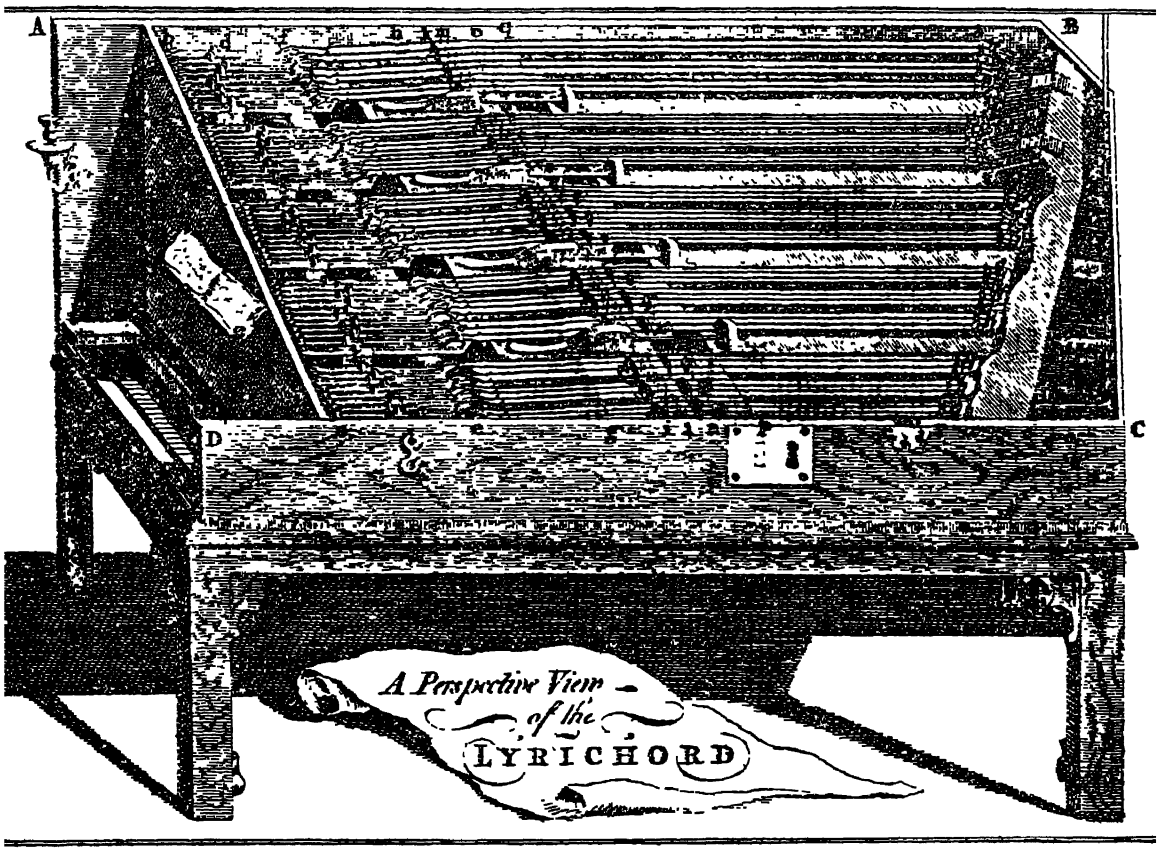


Fig. 1. The Lyrichord: from an engraving dated 1755. Invented by Roger Plenius about 1740 and subsequently exhibited many times in London. It was the most elaborate of many attempts to obtain sustained sounds from a stringed keyboard instrument. The strings were drawn down by the keys on to resined wheels, of which there were fifteen, rotated at different speeds by clockwork. Plenius was one of the English pioneers of the pianoforte.

German who occupied premises in Princes Street, Hanover Square, from 1761 onwards. There can be no doubt at all that Zumpe was entirely responsible for creating the early vogue for the pianoforte in England, and was the first to begin the systematic manufacture of such instruments (Pl. 85A). Zumpe's pianoforte made no pretence of competing with the concert harpsichord of the day. It was a small domestic instrument in the form of a shallow rectangular box on a trestle stand, and known from its shape as the 'square' piano. It is due entirely to the immediate popularity of the square that the pianoforte so rapidly gained a foothold in this country. The serious challenge to the harpsichord came later, when the larger pianos, significantly called 'grands' in contrast to the (by now) common squares, began to be developed by other makers. Nevertheless, the instrument had already begun to appear in public before 1770. It was first mentioned as an alternative to the harpsichord on an English music title-page in 1766 (Pl. 88A). In 1767 Mr Charles Dibdin demonstrated the new instrument between the acts of the *Beggar's Opera* at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, and in 1768 John Christian Bach (eleventh son of J. S. Bach) gave a public recital on a Zumpe for which he had paid fifty pounds. Bach's Opus 5 Sonatas, pub-

lished in the following year, was the first of his compositions to cater specifically for the new instrument. These events would seem to mark the end of the experimental stage of the pianoforte in this country, and the beginning of its wider propagation. The polite letters of the *dilettanti* frequently leave us in no doubt as to the fashionable cult of the Zumpe piano. The trend of taste is also clearly shown by the title-pages of keyboard music published in England during this period. These begin to include the piano as an alternative instrument to the harpsichord about 1770. During the next twenty years the custom of catering for both instruments became almost universal, following which there was a steady decline in the number of times the harpsichord was mentioned, until by the end of the century it had practically disappeared from printed titles.

Zumpe's prototype was widely copied, and although improvements and modifications soon followed, it remained basically the same almost to the close of the century. The original action was of the simplest description (Fig. 2). The compass, at first $4\frac{1}{2}$ octaves, was soon extended to five, and this remained standard until 1795 or thereabouts, though it was exceptionally exceeded before that date. The stringing was 'bicord' (two strings per note), the upper strings being steel, the middle plain brass, and the lowest dozen or so overspun with an open spiral 'gimping' of finer wire. The strings passed diagonally across the case from hitchpins along the back, behind the keyboard, to tuning or wrestpins set in the small square soundboard at the right-hand end of the case. Dampers were provided for every note. These projected on arms from the back of the case, and rested on the strings just above the hammers. Each damper was raised when the key was pressed, by a little ivory push rod resting on the back or tail of the key. There were usually three hand stops, housed in the box-like end of the case beside the bass keys. Two of these raised the dampers in the same way as the modern 'loud' or sustaining pedal, but in two sections, treble and bass. The third pushed a strip of soft leather – the *sordino* or mute – against the underside of the strings for soft effects. There were occasional variations in the number and arrangement of the stops, but the important and permanent feature which they served to establish was the independent damper-lifting mechanism of the pianoforte.

Space does not allow a full description of all the developments which took place prior to 1810, but a few may be touched upon. John Broadwood's partnership with the harpsichord maker, Shudi, dated from 1770, and very shortly afterwards the firm began making pianos. The earliest known Broadwood square was made in 1774. In 1783 he patented a slightly improved underdamper action for squares (Fig. 3). This enabled the wrestpins to be placed in a better position at the back of the case instead of on the soundboard, but although the patent provided for a damper pedal, neither this nor hand stops appear to have been fitted to surviving specimens, and the design must therefore be considered reactionary in this respect (Pl. 85B). In 1786, John Geib, a native of Leipsig, introduced into the square piano action an adjustable spring-loaded jack in imitation of Cristofori's original action (Fig. 4). In 1794, Southwell of Dublin devised a means of extending the compass of the square while retaining fairly compact proportions by placing the highest section of the action and keyboard on a separate frame which slid under the soundboard. He also reverted to an improved form of overdamper, associated with a somewhat clumsy pedal mechanism which took off the dampers by lifting all the key tails, consequently reducing the depth of touch of the keyboard when operated. This defect was subsequently rectified.

The square piano is often treated with scorn by modern writers, but technically it was one of the most difficult forms of stringed keyboard instrument to make. English and Anglo-German craftsmen reached a particularly high standard of excellence with this form of the instrument, and in doing so they created the domestic vogue for the piano which has lasted almost to our own day. In the formative years of the pianoforte, a great deal of pioneer work and experiment was carried out first on the square, the extensive demand for these instruments ensuring that any new device was adequately tested.

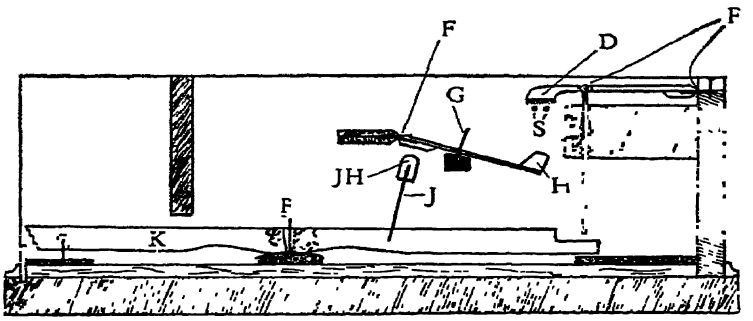


Fig. 2.

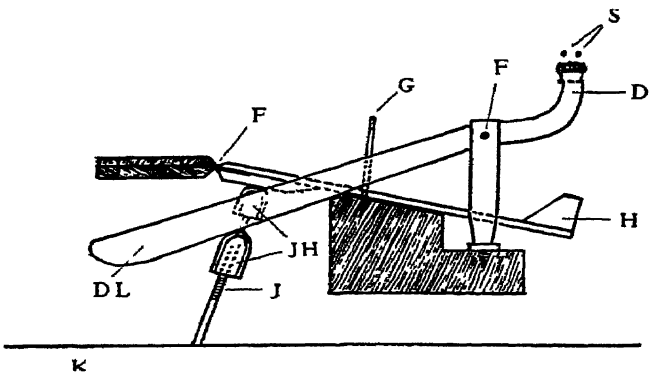


Fig. 3.

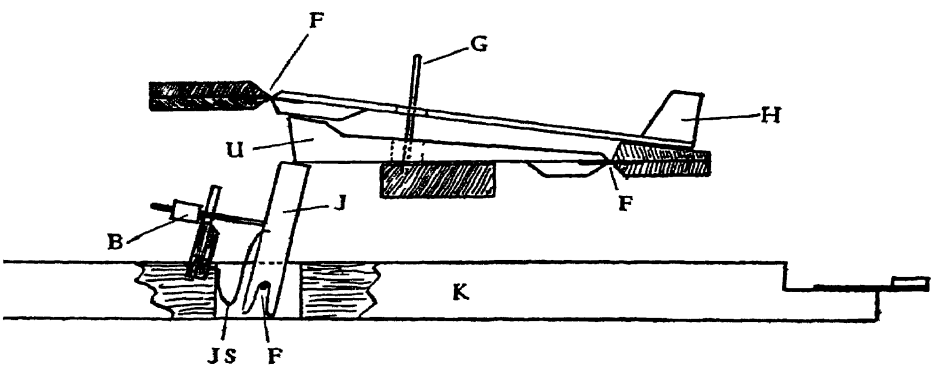


Fig. 4.

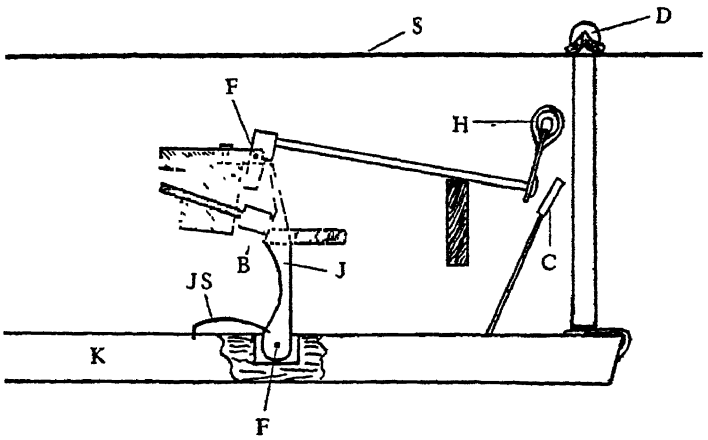


Fig. 5.

Fig. 2. Cross-Section of a Square Piano, *c.* 1760 (after Zumpe). Showing Action Unit. A wire jack rigidly fixed in the key merely pushes the hammer towards the strings. At the same time the damper is lifted from the strings by the key tail.

Fig. 3. Square Pianoforte Action (Broadwood, 1783), with gravity-return Underdamper. The hammer is operated as in Fig. 2, by a rigid jack, the lower head of which also lifts the weighted damper lever. The damper unit is made of brass.

Fig. 4. Square Pianoforte Action, with Spring Jack (after John Geib, 1786: from an instrument by Longman and Broderip, *c.* 1790). The principle of the moving jack enables it to drive the hammer towards the string until the last possible instant, when it clears, or 'escapes', thus letting the hammer fall away on rebound though the key remains down. The Geib action also includes a separate 'underhammer' lever which allows the motion to be transferred very close to the hinge of the hammer proper, and improves velocity and touch. This action is a late adaptation of that used by Christofori, the inventor of the piano, *c.* 1709–20.

Fig. 5. The English Grand Pianoforte Action. Evolved after 1770 by the pioneer makers of the English grand, Backers, Broadwood and Stodart, this type of action was still in use at the end of the nineteenth century. The jack acts directly on the hammer butt. As it rises it is thrust aside by the set-off button, thus effecting 'escapement', and leaving the hammer free to fall. While the key remains down the hammer is held by the check to prevent a ricochet and aid quick repetition of the note if required.

KEY TO FIGS. 2–5.

B. Set-off Button.	G. Guide Pin.	K. Key.
C. Check.	H. Hammer.	
D. Damper.	J. Jack.	S. Strings.
DL. Damper Lever.	JH. Jack Heads.	
FF. Fulcra or Pivot-Points.	JS. Jack Spring.	UH. Underhammer.

Meantime, the harpsichord was far from moribund. Indeed, some of the finest English harpsichords date from late-Georgian times, and from the workshops of Shudi and the Kirkmans. It is these instruments which have been most influential in the modern revival of harpsichord making in this country. In the 1760's Shudi introduced his much-discussed 'Venetian Swell', a louvred shutter placed over the strings and opened or closed by a foot pedal to produce a graded loudness or softness (Pl. 86). This has been called a 'last-ditch device' whereby the harpsichord tried to meet the challenge of the piano; but the latter was in no fit state before 1770 seriously to rival the well-established harpsichord. The swell seems rather to reflect the growing 'sensibility' which was infusing all musical activity at this time. It was the *grand* piano which, a few years later, gradually began to replace the harpsichord as the typical concert keyboard instrument. The last harpsichords were made in England about the year 1800.

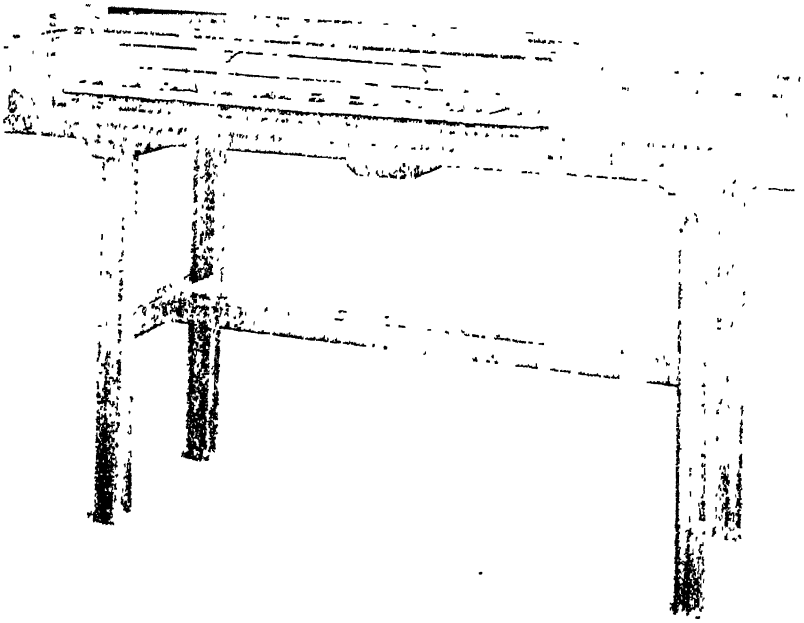
The English grand is less-well documented than the square, but it is believed to have been developed by Broadwood, Stodart and Backers between 1770 and 1780. In its final pre-1800 form it had a compass of 5½ octaves of tricord strings, steel in the treble and brass in the bass, none of the latter being overspun. The 'English' action, which has been attributed to Backers, was always used (Fig. 5). There were two pedals, as on the modern instrument, the right a damper-lifting or sustaining pedal, the other a soft pedal, shifting the keyboard and action bodily sideways to strike 3, 2 or 1 strings of the tricord (Pl. 87).

Musical effects of the piano

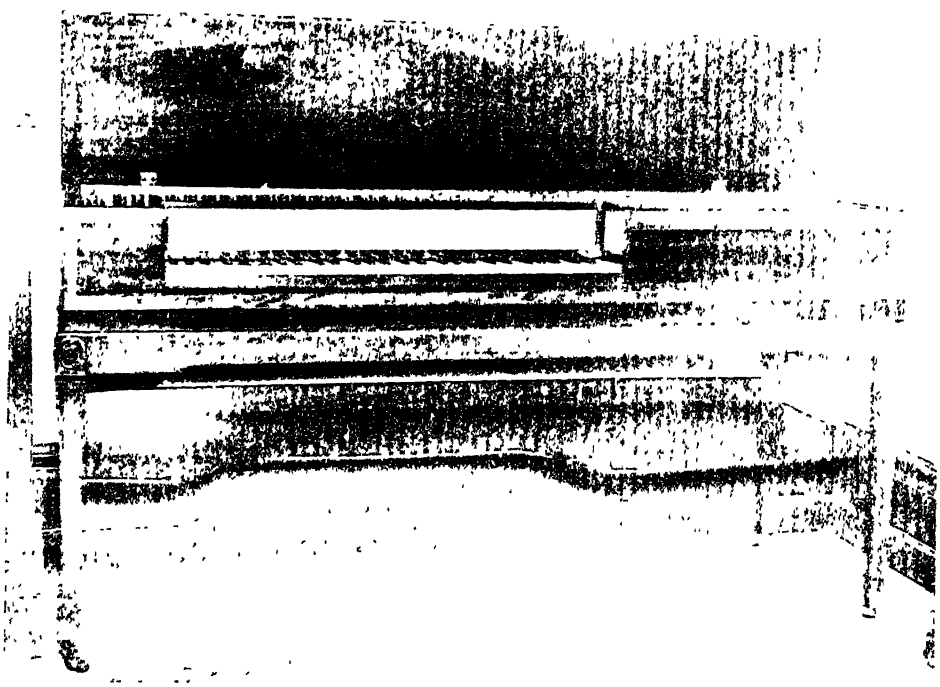
The influence of the pianoforte on the trend of musical taste was beginning to be felt in a number of ways by about 1780. It was increasingly realized that the instrument was capable of certain forms of musical treatment which were unsuitable for the harpsichord. By reason of the fact that both loudness and accentuation were directly under the control of the fingers, the piano even in its early state was potentially capable of 'singing' a cantabile melody, while its accompaniment could be shaded to any degree of relative softness, again by touch alone. Percussive full chords, spread chords and arpeggii, rapid repetitions of the same note, tremolandos, 'Alberti basses', all sounded effective and convincing on the pianoforte where on the harpsichord they would have been trivial and lifeless. Above all, the independent control of the damping – which the harpsichord never possessed – whereby the sound could continue after the finger was lifted from the key, opened up an entirely new range of keyboard textures and sonorities which the next generation of composers was quick to seize upon as a fresh means of expression.

One of the most influential pioneers in composing in the new keyboard style was Muzio Clementi (1752–1832), a native of Rome who had been brought to England as a youth by Peter Beckford, and who subsequently became famous as a player on, and composer for, the piano. Even in his early Opus 2 Sonatas (see Pl. 88B), written at the age of eighteen, he already showed an amazing grasp of the essential 'pianism' of the piano. They contain many passages which would have been unthinkable on the harpsichord, and made a profound impression on his hearers when he played them in London a year or two later. Clementi rose to great eminence as a composer for, and teacher of the piano, on which he must be considered the first virtuoso performer. He was also an excellent business man, and through his personal energies resuscitated the firm of Longman and Broderip, transforming it into an important publishing house and piano manufactory which survives to this day as Messrs Collard and Collard.

One other repercussion the advent of the pianoforte had on the musical scene must not be overlooked. In the last quarter of the century the general pitch of musical instruments rose sharply in England. So long as the harpsichord held sway, the pitch stayed close to the old chamber pitch which had been used since the late seventeenth century, for the harpsichord worked best with long, thin slack strings. The piano not only required shorter and thicker strings to withstand the



(A) Square Pianoforte by Johannes Zumpe, London, 1767. 4½ octaves, bicord, 2 hand stops (damper and sourdine). Trestle stand. One of the earliest surviving English pianos. *Victoria and Albert Museum.*

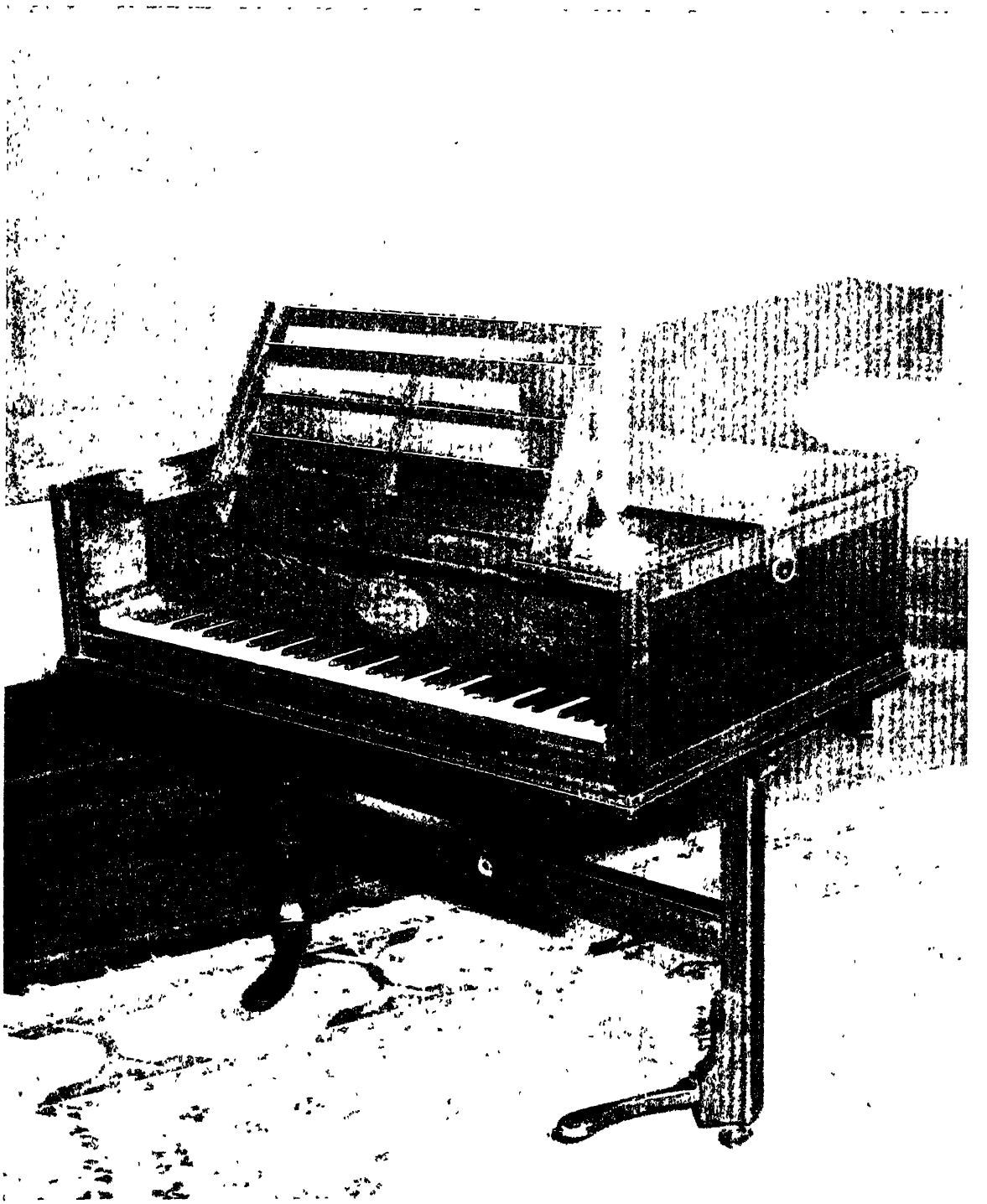


(B) Square Pianoforte, by John Broadwood, London, 1792. 5 octaves, bicord, no stops or pedals. French stand. Underdamper action. *Author's Collection.*

PLATE 85

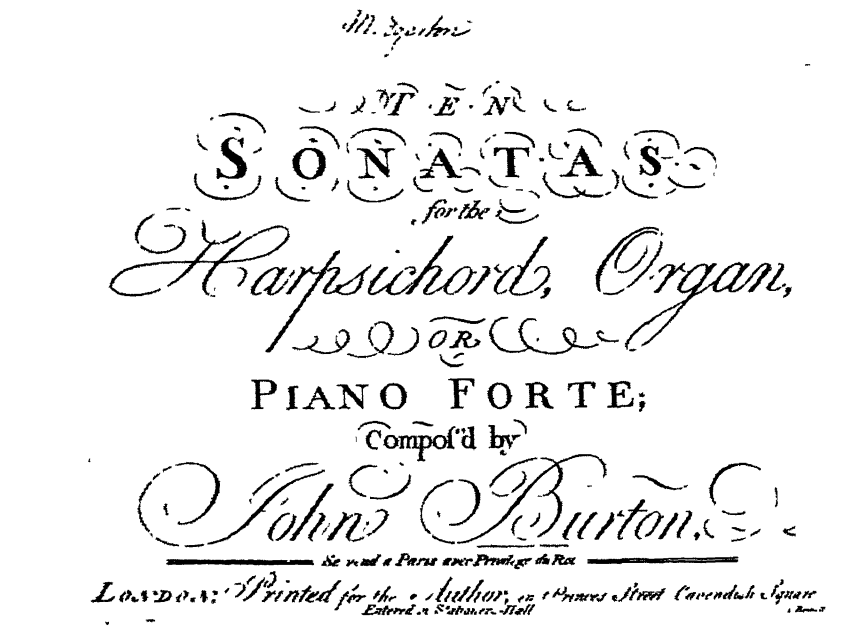
Harpsichord, by Burkat Shudi, London, 1766. 5 hand stops, 'machine' and 'Venetian swell' pedals. Shudi patented the swell action in 1769. *W. R. Thomas.*

PLATE 86



Grand Pianoforte, by John Broadwood, London, 1798. 5½ octaves, tricord, 2 pedals.
Author's Collection.

PLATE 87

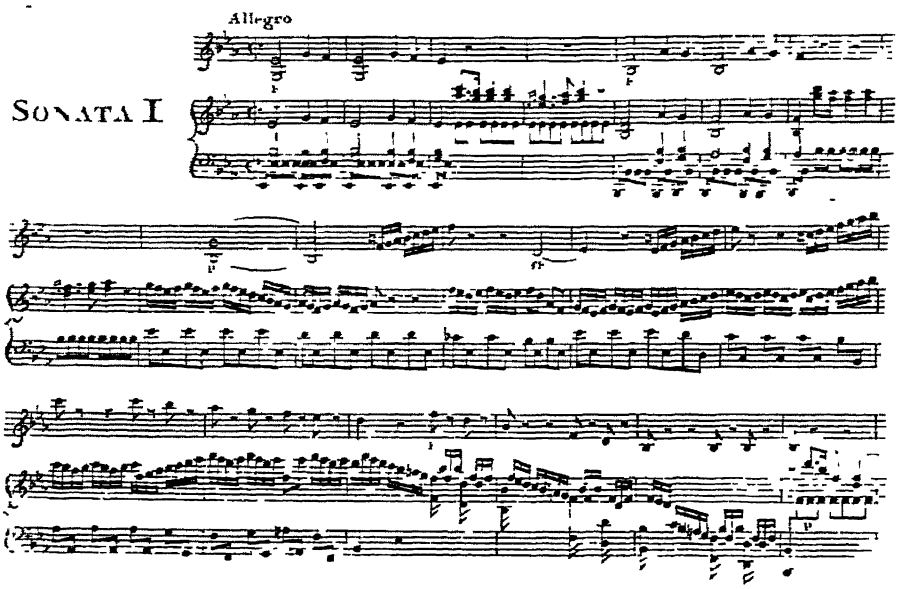

M. Sparkes

SIX
SONATAS
for the
Harpsichord, Organ,
OR
PIANO FORTE;
Compos'd by
John Burton.

Se vend a Paris avec Privilege du Roi.

LONDON: Printed for the Author, at Princes Street Cavendish Square
Entered at Stationers Hall

(A) Title page of the earliest English music to mention the pianoforte, 1766. *British Museum.*



(B) Opening page of Clementi's Sonata Opus 2, No. 1 (*c.* 1772) for Pianoforte. *British Museum.*

PLATE 88

(1)

THE MUSICK

for the

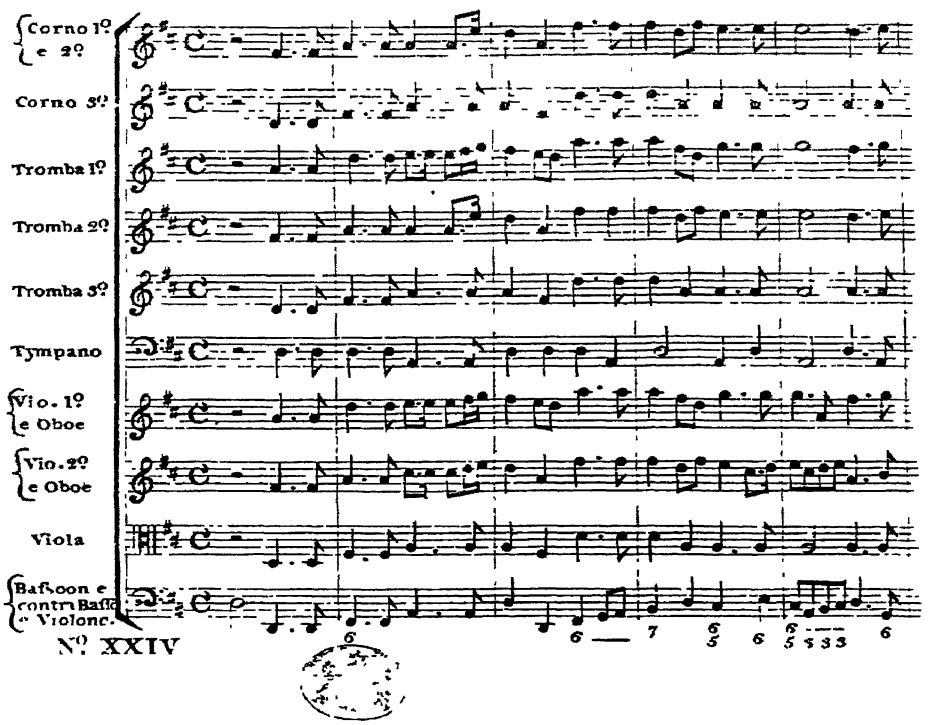
Royal Fireworks,

Performed in the Year 1749.

Composed by

G. F. HANDEL.

OVERTURE.



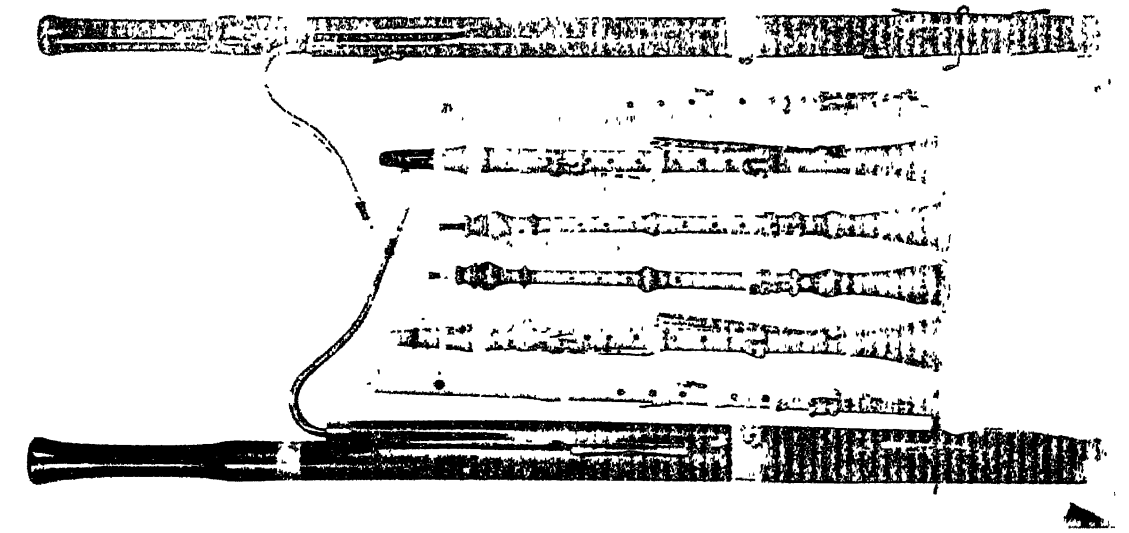
Opening page of the full score of Handel's 'Fireworks' music, from Dr Samuel Arnold's collected edition, Part 24 (*c.* 1790).

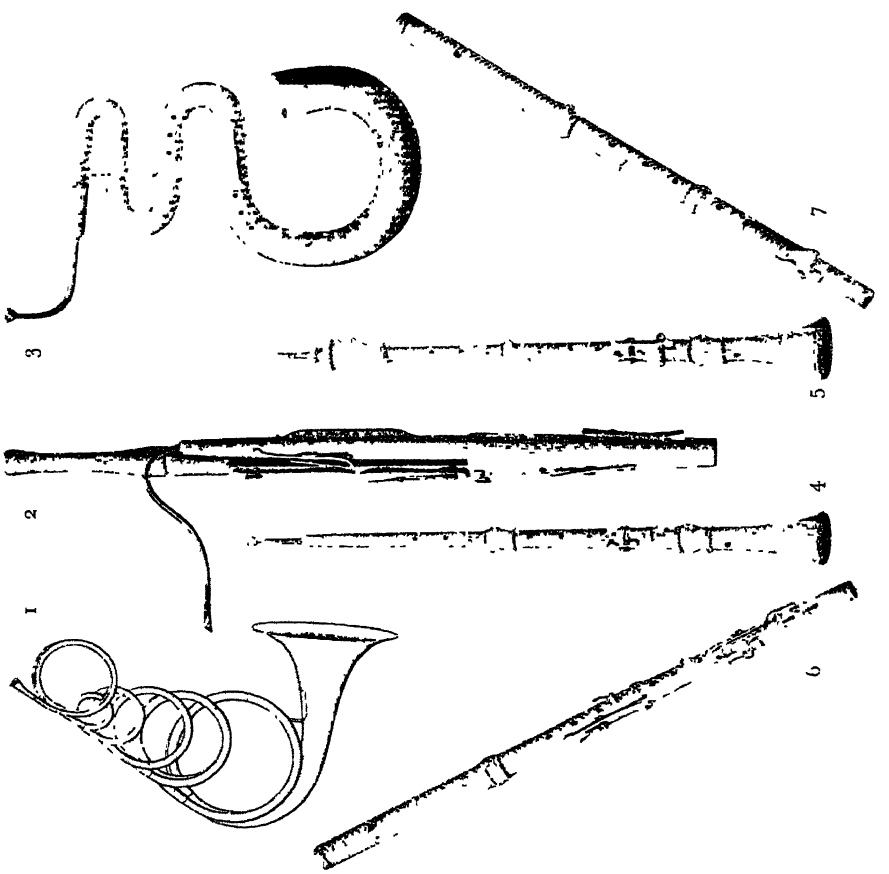
PLATE 89

(A) Hand-horn, French, early nineteenth century. *The Galpin Society.*

(B) Serpent, by T. Key, London, *c.* 1830. 7 keys. *Lanclot Vinng.*

PLATE 90



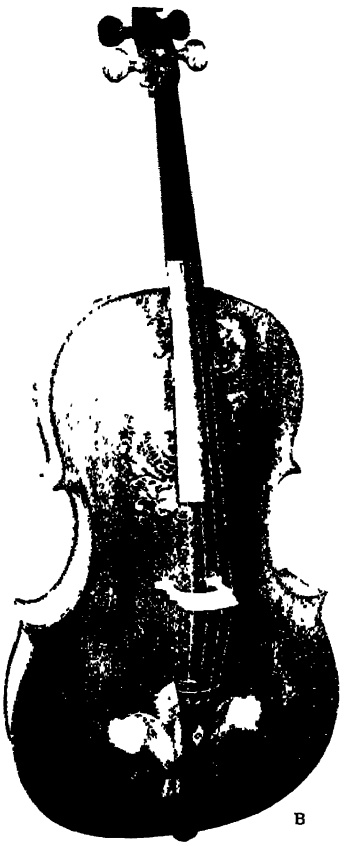


(A) Wind Instruments. (*After engravings dated 1807–11 from Rees' Encyclopaedia at the British Museum.*) 1. French Horn, with crooks; 2. 8-keyed Bassoon; 3. Serpent; 4 & 5. 2-keyed Oboes, straight and decorated types, showing the characteristic difference of length due to the rise in pitch; 6. 7-keyed Flute; 7. 1-keyed Flute.

(B) Woodwind Instruments. Pairs of 6-keyed Bassoons (by Parker and Milhouse), 6-keyed Flutes (by W. H. Potter), 6-keyed Clarinets (by Cramer and Simpson), and 2-keyed Oboes (by Milhouse and Goulding). *Author's Collections.*

A

(A) Violin by James and Henry Banks, 1798
W. E. Hill & Sons



B

C

(C) Double Bass, by William Forster, senior, 1789. Made for the private band of George III.
The Galpin Society.

(B) Violoncello, by William Forster, senior, 1782. Painted with Royal Arms and Prince of Wales' feathers and the inscription 'Liberty and Loyalty'. *W. E. Hill & Sons.*

PLATE 92

impact of the hammer action; it forced the general pitch up in its quest for a singing tone in the treble register. On the evidence of wind instruments, the orchestral pitch rose about a semitone between 1760 and 1800, by which time it was practically at the same level as it is today.

Changes in wind instruments

By 1760 the heyday of the recorder, or English flute, was at an end. True, it still survived in one form or another, but with the passing of the Baroque trio-sonata and the Baroque orchestral style it was no longer an instrument of the professional wind player. The transverse, or German flute, which had been gaining ground steadily since the beginning of the century, now assumed complete ascendancy. It is often said that the flute replaced the recorder because it was louder, but this is scarcely true of the contemporary instrument. The flute had the advantage of a tone-colour more directly under the player's control, a more extended compass and a more caressing and vocal type of articulation. These were musical qualities which were increasingly being sought in the newer styles of contemporary music. In many ways the differences between the two types of instrument resembled those of the harpsichord and piano, and the same trends in musical taste were responsible for the replacement of one by the other. Shortly after 1760 the simple 1-keyed flute underwent an important modification; additional keys were added to eliminate some of the 'cross-fingered' semitones. The scale of the simple flute did not agree very well with the preferred tonalities in which orchestral music was, for a number of reasons, being written, and it was brought into line by giving it this higher degree of mechanization. The flute was the first woodwind to be so treated, and it was in England that the lead was taken in the matter. The Frenchman, F. D. Castilon, writing in the Supplement to Diderot's *Encyclopédie* in 1777, reported the English 7-keyed flute, and examples made before 1770 are known (Pl. 91A(6) and B).

The oboe emerged from its highly-ornate Baroque form about 1760, when there was a reaction towards a plain-looking model much favoured by makers and players up till about 1775. These instruments were made in large quantities in England but apparently nowhere else. W. T. Parke, the oboist whose *Memoires* were published in 1830, disliked it and said that it looked and sounded like a post-horn (Pl. 91A(4)). About 1775, and coincident with the rise in pitch from the Baroque *Kammerton*, there was a reversion to the ornamented style prevalent on the Continent (Pl. 91A(5), and B), with the prominent 'onion' swelling at the top. This played a considerable part in forming the ideal tone of the early oboe, which was an instrument of far greater musical subtlety than is now suspected. The oboe was, in fact, the most useful and adaptable of the woodwind, capable of meeting the new demands for finer shades of expression without any essential modification of its Baroque form.

The most important addition to the woodwind after 1760 was the clarinet. This instrument, which was invented just before 1700, had taken about fifty years to develop, because the principle of the cylinder-bored tube coupled to a single-reed mouthpiece gave rise to technical problems which were not at first fully mastered. Much experiment was carried out, chiefly abroad, but by 1760 the instrument was available in this country and had begun to appear in opera scores. The first English instruments appeared a little later. They were made in four sections; the long, beak-like mouthpiece with its connecting socket (later separated as a short wooden sleeve, known as the 'barrel'); the upper and lower middle joints, each with three finger holes, and the stock and bell on which were mounted the three lowest keys. Towards the end of the century the stock was also separated from the bell as a matter of expediency in manufacture. These instruments had five keys, usually made of brass. With this equipment the clarinet was only barely on a parity with the two-keyed oboe, owing to the peculiarities of its scale. Even so, it was capable of playing safely in only two key signatures as against the six or seven of the simple oboe, and for this reason the custom arose, and persists to the present time, of building clarinets in different sizes or tonalities (Pl. 91B). Yet despite its technical disadvantages

the clarinet was welcomed everywhere in cultivated music for its new and ingratiating tone. The recognition and assimilation of its qualities came fairly early in England. It was probably here in 1763 that the infant Mozart first heard the clarinet, for which he was later destined to do so much.

The bassoon remained much the same through the greater part of the eighteenth century. It had always been a capable soloist and the most useful and flexible bass voice amongst wind instruments. But, after 1760, as it gradually became dissociated from the old style of 'general bass' and was required to stand alone as the bass to a steadily expanding wind ensemble, steps were taken to increase its sonority. Although the key mechanism was added to (from four keys in 1760 the number rose to eight in 1800) this was relatively unimportant beside the change in its tone, which was achieved by alterations in the bore and the size and disposition of the note holes (Pl. 91A(2), and B).

The French horn remained a 'natural' instrument, playing only the harmonics proper to its tube length, although this could be varied by the addition of interchangeable 'crooks' to put it in the key of the music being played. Such horns were known in England as 'chromatic French horns' (Pl. 91A(1)). A great advance in its musical possibilities had been introduced about the beginning of this period by a horn player named Hampel, of the Dresden Court. Hampel played with his hand in the bell of his instrument, and by this means was able to control the pitch of the natural sounds sufficiently to obtain a complete scale from that part of the compass where this did not nominally exist. Gradually a regular technique was worked out which supplied all the missing notes in the natural harmonic scale by skilful changes of the hand position. With the growth of this custom, however, the whole character of the instrument changed, for the stopped notes were veiled, dreamy and 'romantic', quite unlike the bright open sonority of the instrument as formerly played. The universal adoption of the hand-horn belongs to the early nineteenth century, but travelling virtuosi did much to popularize it before then, and to influence the way in which horn parts were being written in the new Classical orchestra (Pl. 90A).

The natural trumpet, also played with crooks, was supplemented near the end of the eighteenth century by the reappearance of the slide-trumpet, an instrument well-known in Purcell's time. It had a telescopic U-tube at the upper end, which could be extended, as in the trombone but in the reverse direction, towards the player. The object was again to supply missing notes and to correct others. Early in the nineteenth century there was brought out the keyed bugle, with note-holes cut in the sides after the manner of a woodwind instrument – again with the idea of giving it a complete scale.

Finally we must mention the serpent, in the construction of which the English excelled from the late eighteenth century onwards. This instrument first appeared in France towards the end of the sixteenth century, and was described in an English manuscript about a hundred years later. But most surviving instruments date from the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. The serpent is a bass wind instrument, played with a cup mouthpiece like the brass, yet having fingerholes like the woodwind. Its peculiarity is the shape that gives it its name (Pls. 90B and 91A(3)). It is made of wood, laboriously built up into a wide, expanding tube, in thin curved sections, the whole being bound together with leather and canvas for strength. Its immense popularity was due to the lack of any other bass wind instruments at this time having a full-bodied and substantial tone.

The Wind Band and its music

Music for wind instruments received considerable attention during the second half of the eighteenth century, when wars and rumours of wars led to the creation of so many military bands. In writing for an all-wind combination, composers were forced to consider more closely the nature of the medium and to invent ways of blending the different species of instruments effectively according to their several tone qualities and technical idiosyncrasies. This was a new prob-

lem, for though wind music had always existed in association with Royal and military pomp, there had never before been so great a variety of instruments from which to make up a balanced effect. Most composers of the period were caught up in this occupation at one time or another, and it brought beneficial results to the art of music as a whole and the orchestra in particular.

The standard minimum wind band was probably evolved in Germany, where it became known as the *Harmoniemusik*, a name which itself suggests chorus effects. This consisted at first of pairs each of oboes, clarinets, horns and bassoons, to which were later added flutes and perhaps a trumpet and serpent. At the same time, a number of Oriental percussion instruments was taken over, such as bass drums, triangles, cymbals and bells, to add to the prestige and the din. These instruments, known collectively as 'the Turkish Music', are the direct ancestors of the modern orchestral 'kitchen'.

The Classical orchestra, which is the basis of all modern orchestras, came into being when the self-complete *Harmoniemusik* was grafted on to a string section, and the old ensemble organization centred on the 'basso continuo' with its accompanying keyboard instrument was finally discarded. Composers now learned to fill-out and complete the harmony by careful disposition of the available instrumental voices, instead of relying on the improvisation of the continuo player. They found that horns added more to the fulness of the sound when given unassuming middle parts in the harmony, instead of being made to play melodies in their highest register; and for the same reason, that trumpets, when used, had greater weight and portent the nearer they kept to the traditional outline of their field calls.

All in all, the proper blending together of wind instruments profoundly influenced the development of the orchestra, and although the finest results belong to the symphonists of the Viennese school, the English contribution was by no means negligible inasmuch as we, as a military nation, developed wind bands and wind playing to a high degree.

Stringed instruments

In late Georgian times the English school of violin making rose to greater eminence, and if it never quite reached that superlative class of the greatest Italian masters, at least it maintained a supply of native-built instruments, many of which were of considerable distinction. It was now that English makers began to desert the high-modelled Stainer pattern of the violin for the shallower and more elegant contours of the Amatis and Stradivarius (Pl. 92). The most eminent pioneers in reviving Cremonese models were Benjamin Banks of Salisbury (1727–1795) and William Forster ('Old Forster', 1739–1808). It seems to have been realized that while the Stainer model worked well at the Baroque low pitch, and with the smaller-toned and more incisive attack of the older bow, it tended to become nasal and thin under a higher string tension and with the heavier and longer negative-curved bows then coming into use. England did not produce a bow maker of the genius of the Parisian, Tourte (1747–1838), but it contributed in no small measure to the transition from the short, straight, pointed bow of Baroque times. This transition is epitomized in the surviving work of John Dodd (1752–1839) in which the gradual evolution of the 'hatchet' head and the rationalization of the curvature and taper of the stick may clearly be seen.

Music publishing

The publishing of music was greatly encouraged and expanded throughout this period by the potential market which the growing middle classes presented, with their ever-increasing curiosity about all cultural matters. The pleasure gardens and the theatres provided ready platforms for the public performance of every kind of music, from which the amateurs of the day could carry off their favourite airs to play on the new pianoforte at home. Many firms sprang into existence to meet this demand. Music became a lucrative commodity with its own warehouses, selling instruments, music and accessories. Many of these warehouses had their own workshops for the

manufacture of instruments, while others put their names to instruments made by the leading craftsmen of the day. Even the instrument makers dabbled in music publishing.

Home tutors for instruments, usually containing a good proportion of the popular tunes of the time, which had been a feature of English music publishing since the Commonwealth, now became a spate; while orchestral music – symphonies, overtures (the terms were practically synonymous) and other pieces, besides the band parts of whole oratorios and operas were now printed, and thus facilitated the wider dissemination of these larger forms. Some full scores had appeared. The mammoth Handel Festivals, held in Westminster Abbey in 1784 and subsequently, inspired the first 'collected edition' of any great composer's works, Dr Samuel Arnold's (1740–1802) *Works of Handel in Score*, published between 1787 and 1797 in 180 parts and containing the bulk of Handel's output including many works never before printed (Pl. 89).

Tail-piece from T. Bewick's *A History of British Birds*, Vol. 1, 1797.

Bookbinding and Printing

Bookbinding

HOWARD M. NIXON

Throughout the reign of George III the stock of a bookseller would normally be bound either in plain leather (calf or sheepskin) or in paper-covered boards. The library of a nobleman, however, or even that of many a mere gentleman, would largely be clothed in full morocco, often with elaborate gold tooling, and the consequent boom in the 'West End' trade attracted a number of German binders, many of whom quickly rose to positions of eminence in their profession. The first to arrive was probably John Baumgarten. He was evidently an established figure in the West End trade by 1771 and when he died in 1782 he was described in the *Gentleman's Magazine* as 'a man of uncommon excellence in his profession'. Two other Germans who worked for him, C. S. Kalthoeber and Henry Walther, became figures of importance in the 1790's, while others who made their mark at this period included Charles Hering, Charles Meyer and the partners Staggemeier & Welcher. The Germans did not, however, have everything their own way, and two of the most famous of English binders flourished in the last quarter of the eighteenth century – Edwards of Halifax and Roger Payne.

Stylistically the most remarkable feature of the period is that some neo-classical bindings preceded any examples in the rococo manner. Bindings are known from several different shops with characteristic rococo 'C' scrolls, figures and animals, often accompanied by decorative elements in the Chinese taste, but these are unlikely to be earlier than 1770 and illustrate a common tendency of English fine binding design to lag behind the current mode in other arts. The bindings of the presentation copies of the first volume of Stuart and Revett's *Antiquities of Athens*, 1762, and Robert Adam's *Ruins of the Temple of the Emperor Diocletian at Spalatro*, 1764, are in the vanguard of fashion, however, for they were evidently designed by their authors and they are decorated with typical classical ornament. Adam's binding is illustrated in Pl. 93A; the binding of the *Antiquities of Athens* has a central gilt medallion depicting Athene with her owl and serpent within a laurel wreath and an outer anthemion border. The Edwards family, booksellers and binders in Halifax, who subsequently opened a shop in London, specialized in novelties, the most famous being their painted vellum bindings, which had the designs painted on the under-surface of vellum rendered transparent and placed over boards covered with white paper. Roger Payne, notorious for allegedly drunken habits and quaintly-worded bills, was little influenced by current artistic fashions but produced admirable pieces of craftsmanship beautifully tooled to simple but effective designs. The typical 'gold-studded work' on the spines of his bindings was copied not only by most of the German binders in London, but also by the binders of Paris. But while the French were for once imitating their English rivals, the opposite, and more normal, procedure was also in operation, both Walther and Staggemeier & Welcher copying in the 1790's the inlaid bindings with *à répétition* tooling which had been produced in Paris in the first half of the century. Classical designs did not become firmly

established in England until the first decade of the nineteenth century, and it is surprising to note that there is hardly a trace of Gothic until the very end of our period, when 'cathedral' bindings with motifs of Gothic tracery were introduced.

Printing

RUARI MCLEAN

In 1760 the Press was not yet free; but facilities for publication in England were easier than they had been for the previous two hundred years.

The time when an author required wealthy private patronage was over; the days of his bargaining with publishers were just beginning. Printing and publishing were not yet big business, as they were to become when the population began its steep rise at the end of the century. But publishing was evolving as a separate profession. Foundations were laid in this century of firms whose names are still familiar: Rivington in 1711, Longman in 1724, John Murray in 1768, and Constable and Thomas Nelson in Edinburgh before 1800.

It was Johnson who said that the best writing was done for money. His *Dictionary* was published in 1755 at the risk of a group of publishers, including Murray, and he said they treated him very fairly. Hume said of his *History* (1761) that it made him 'not only independent but opulent'. Smollett's *History of England* (1757/8) yielded £10,000. The circumstances of the publication of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, as described in his *Memoir*, have a modern ring. The first impression of the first volume, in 1776, was to have been 500 copies, but this was increased to 1000 at the last moment by the optimism of Strahan, the printer and co-publisher. The book was immediately successful and ran through further impressions of 1500 and 1000. The accounts between author and publisher for the third impression survive and show that Gibbon took two-thirds of the profit, which on 1000 copies was £326 13*s.* 4*d.*, and the publishers, Strahan and Cadell, took only one-third, so the author had every reason to be satisfied.

But much was being produced in the book trade besides literature. In this period of expanding economy and industrial revolution, publication was of more and more importance to engineers, inventors, designers and manufacturers. Other chapters in this volume show the large part played by books in the history of architecture and furniture design, for example, during this period. What state had the technique of printing reached in 1760?

It had altered in no important detail since Elizabethan days. All type had still to be set up by hand, letter by letter. All paper was hand-made, and therefore limited in size to the dimensions of a tray that a man could lift in his two hands. In 1772 James Whatman, the leading paper-maker in England, did not make paper larger than 40″ × 26½″, and doubted if any larger sheet was made in Europe; however, at the instigation of the Royal Antiquarian Society he proceeded to make special equipment for turning out a sheet for them, for a special engraving, measuring

52″ × 31″, and found a profitable new market.[1] Whatman – his name is still synonymous with fine hand-made paper – was also probably the inventor and first manufacturer of wove paper in Europe, first used for Baskerville's *Virgil* in 1757.

That paper was thus limited in size did not in any case matter at this time, since the letterpress printer could not have worked a larger sheet. To obtain one impression, the series of motions – the laying-on of the paper, the running in of the bed, the pulling down of the platen by a lever, and then the previous movements in reverse – was the same as it had always been. Good workmen, whether in Aldus' office in Venice in 1500, or Strahan's in London in 1760, could not exceed about 200 impressions an hour. In 1798 Earl Stanhope patented the first all-iron hand press, and in the nineteenth century expert workmen on iron presses could produce 250 impressions an hour. The first real step in the mechanization of printing was not taken until competition between newspapers to get news on to the streets made it vital to increase the speed of printing. In 1814 *The Times* was printed on a cylinder press driven by steam. This machine was capable of 1800 impressions an hour – a speed not often exceeded today for book printing—but the size of the sheet could now be greatly extended, so that more and more pages could be printed together. And the Fourdrinier invention (*c.* 1804) of making paper by machine, on a roll, provided paper in any size of sheet required.

The problem of casting and composing type by machine took the whole of the nineteenth century to solve.

Of greater importance to the men of the Industrial Revolution, in 1760, were the processes available for the reproduction of plans and drawings. Here, technical facility was probably in advance of what was required of it: engraving on steel could give a fineness of line and clarity in detail that no other process has ever given, and the engraved plans of this period were probably often drawn to a greater degree of accuracy than their subjects attained in construction. Today, our maps and charts of land and sea, our plans for buildings and machines, printed lithographically, are ignoble affairs, compared with the engravings of the eighteenth century.

As well as engravings on steel or copper, etchings and woodcuts were also used for book illustration. Only the woodcut could be printed with type. Until the end of the eighteenth century, engraving was the predominant illustrative process. Lithography was not invented until 1796.

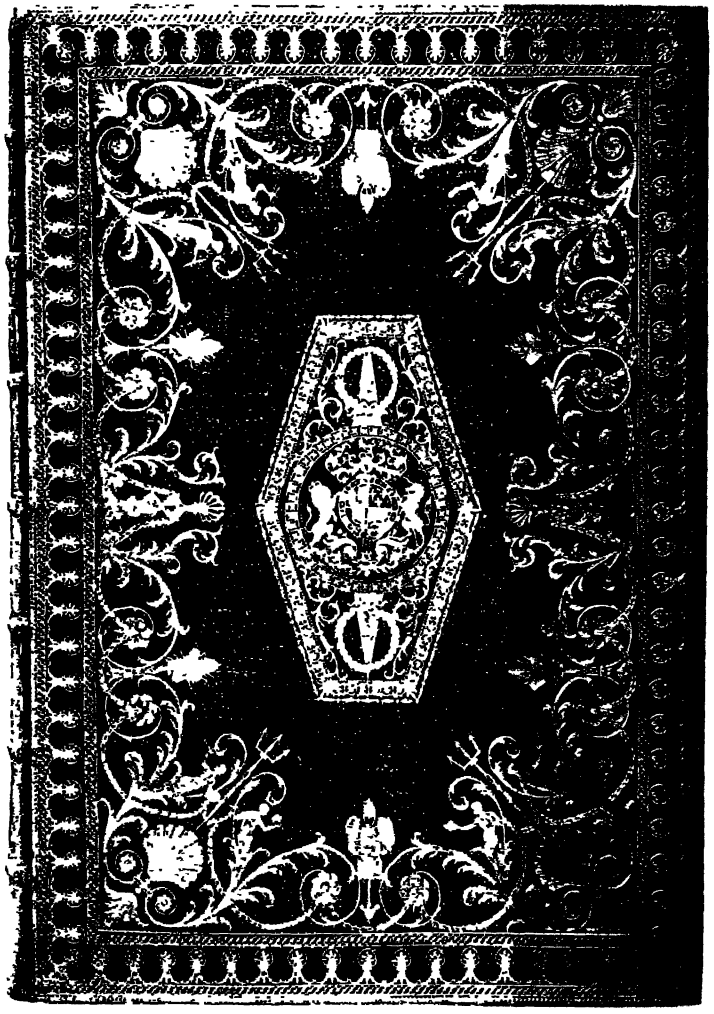
There was no multi-colour printing; but labour was cheap and engraved prints could be coloured by hand, giving effects that no colour printing has ever achieved.

This, then, was the general position of printing in England at the accession of George III. The following sixty years of his reign were a golden period of book design in Great Britain. Among the men then at work were the printers Baskerville, Bulmer, Bensley, Ballantyne, the brothers Foulis and Whittingham the elder; the typefounders Thorne, Joseph and Edmund Fry, William Martin and Figgins; the artists Bewick, Stothard and Rowlandson; the publishers Dodsley, Boydell and Ackermann; and the paper-maker Whatman. These are only a few of the greater names; there were many other fine craftsmen. It is actually more difficult to find an ill-printed book of this period than a good one.

In mid-eighteenth century England even some authors were aware of the difference between good and bad printing. Sterne, for example, when he decided to print the first edition of *Tristram Shandy* at his own expense, wrote to Robert Dodsley (who had declined to pay £50 for the copyright): 'The book shall be printed here, and the impression sent up to you; for as I live at York, and shall correct every proof myself, it shall go perfect into the world, and be printed in so creditable a way, as to paper, type etc., as to do no dishonour to you, who, I know, never choose to print a book meanly. Will you patronize my book upon these terms, and be as kind a friend to it as if you had bought the copyright?'[2] (Sterne got £480 for the next edition).

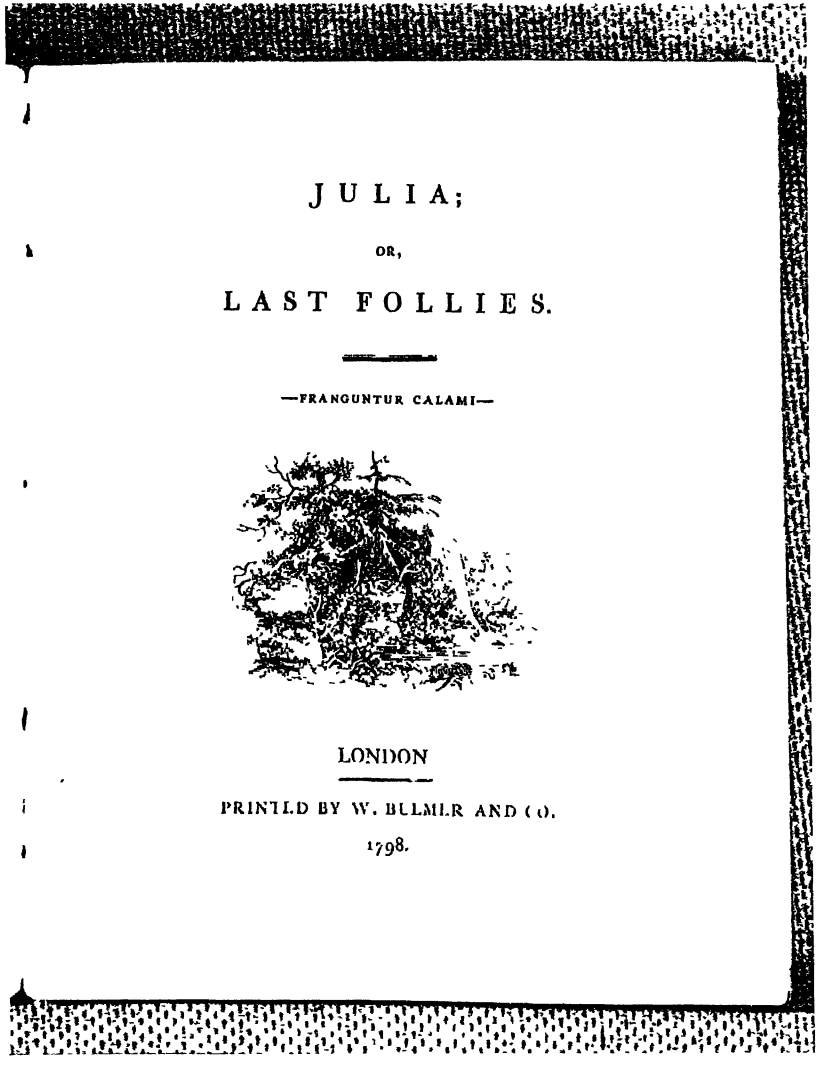
[1] See J. Wardrop, 'Mr. Whatman, Papermaker', *Signature*, 9, London, 1938.

[2] R. Straus, *Robert Dodsley*, London, 1910.



(A) Binding probably designed by Robert Adam on his *Ruins of the Palace of the Emperor Diocletian at Spalatro*, London, 1764. The dedication copy to King George III. Red morocco, gold-tooled. *British Museum.*

(B) A London binding in the rococo style, 1774. *Beattie on Truth*, 1774 Presentation copy to King George III. *British Museum.*



JULIA;

OR,

LAST FOLLIES.

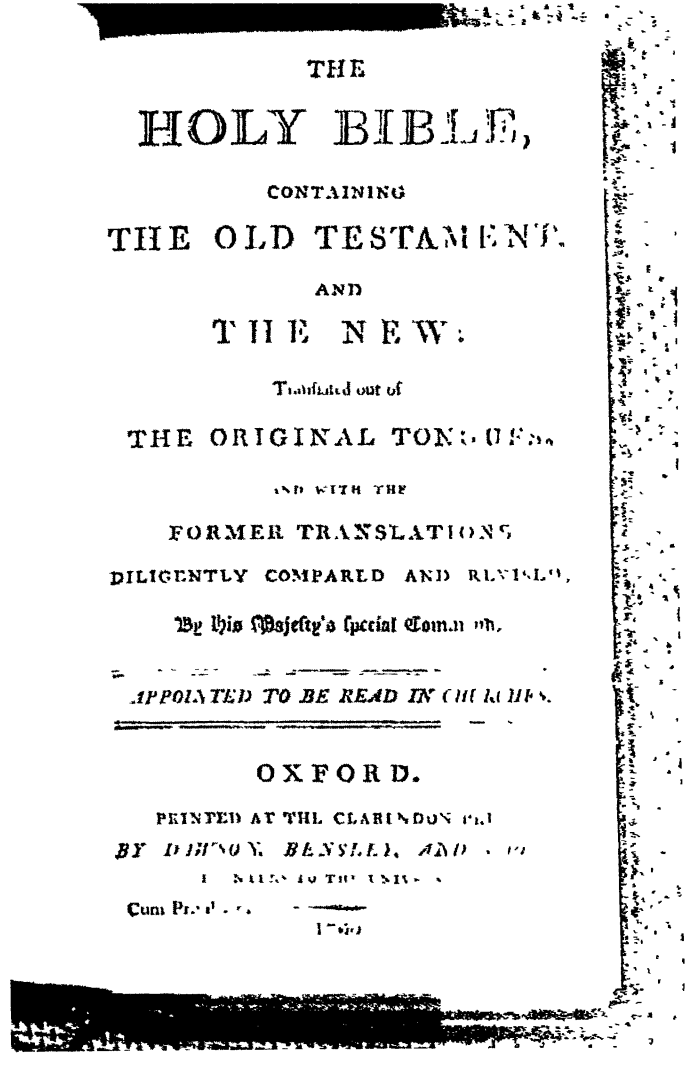
—FRANGUNTUR CALAMI—

LONDON

PRINTED BY W. BULMER AND CO.

1798.

(A) A restrained Bulmer title-page, 1798.



THE

HOLY BIBLE,

CONTAINING

THE OLD TESTAMENT,

AND

THE NEW:

Translated out of

THE ORIGINAL TONGUES,

AND WITH THE

FORMER TRANSLATIONS

DILIGENTLY COMPARED AND REVISED,

By His Majesty's special Command.

APPOINTED TO BE READ IN CHURCHES.

OXFORD.

PRINTED AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

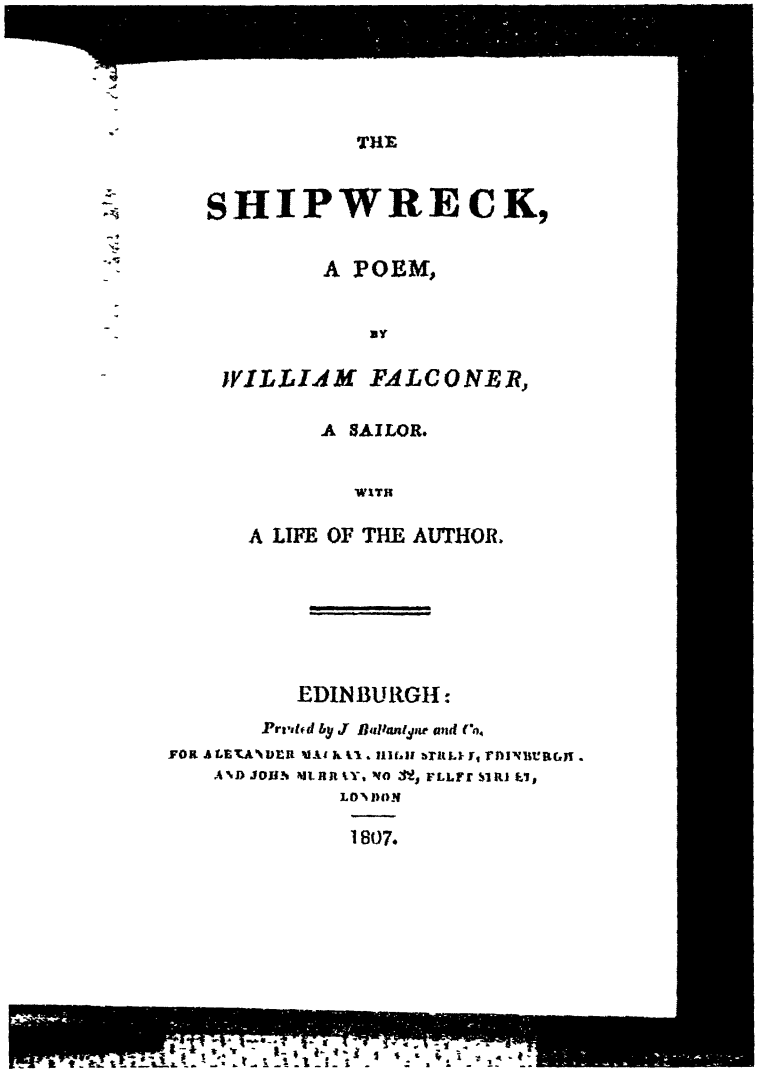
BY DAWSON, BENSLEY, AND CO.

PRINTERS TO THE UNIVERSITY.

Cum Privilegio.

1799.

(B) A typical late eighteenth-century title-page of a pocket Bible, 1799, during Bensley's association with Oxford.



THE

SHIPWRECK,

A POEM,

BY

WILLIAM FALCONER,

A SAILOR.

WITH

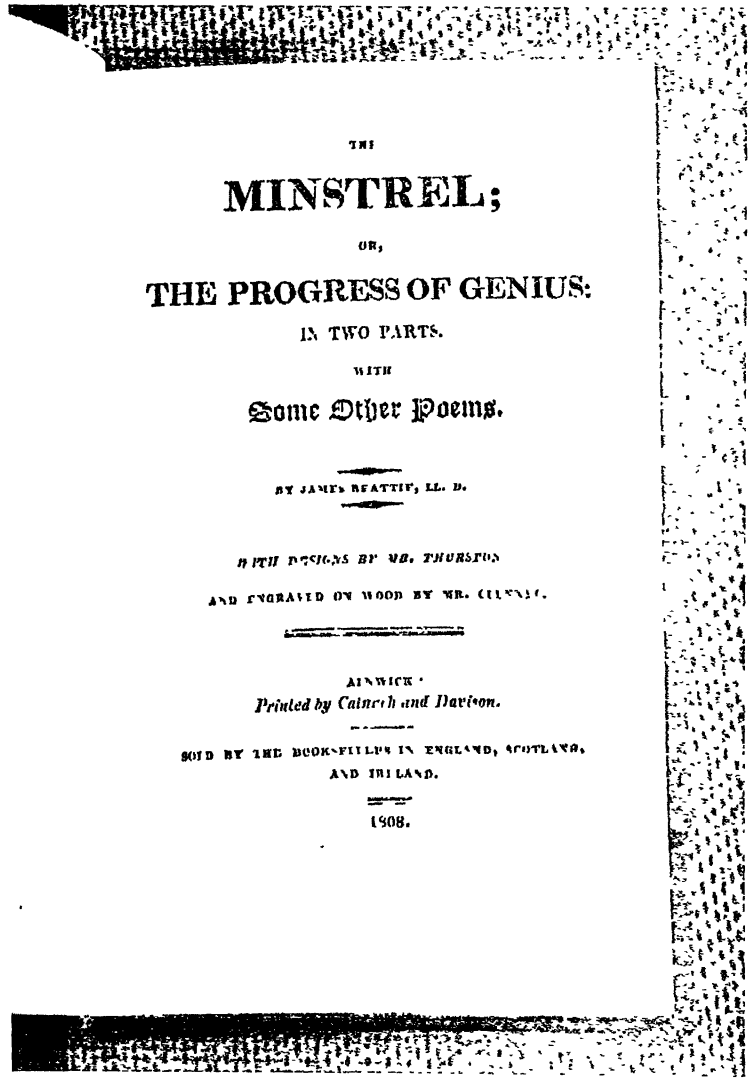
A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

EDINBURGH:

Printed by J. Ballantyne and Co.

FOR ALEXANDER MACKAY, HIGH STREET, EDINBURGH;
AND JOHN MURRAY, NO 32, FLEET STREET,
LONDON

1807.



THE

MINSTREL;

OR,

THE PROGRESS OF GENIUS:

IN TWO PARTS.

WITH

Some Other Poems.

BY JAMES BEATTIE, LL. D.

WITH DESIGNS BY MR. THURSTON

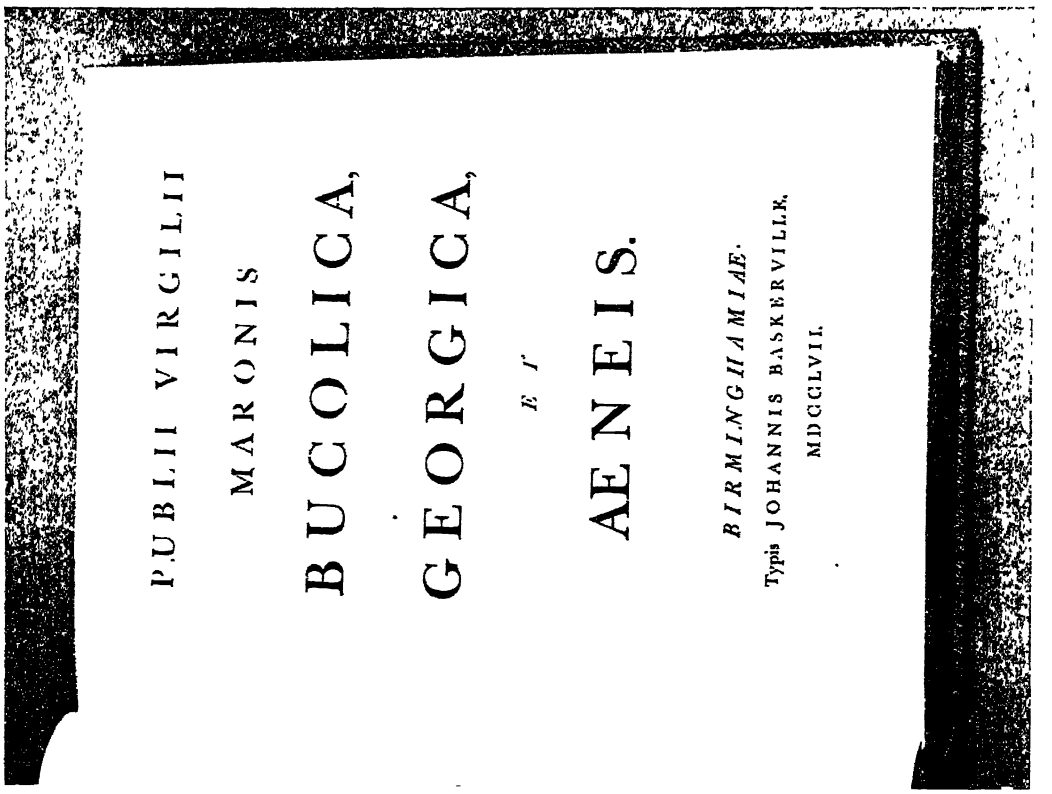
AND ENGRAVED ON WOOD BY MR. CLENNELL.

ALNWICK:
Printed by Catnach and Davison.

SOLD BY THE BOOKSELLERS IN ENGLAND, SCOTLAND,
AND IRELAND.

1808.

Two title-pages showing the simple elegance widespread in Britain at this period. (A) printed by Ballantyne at Edinburgh, 1807; (B) printed by Catnach and Davison at Alnwick, Northumberland, 1808.



PUBLII VIRGILII

MARONIS

BUCOLICA,

GEORGICA,

ET

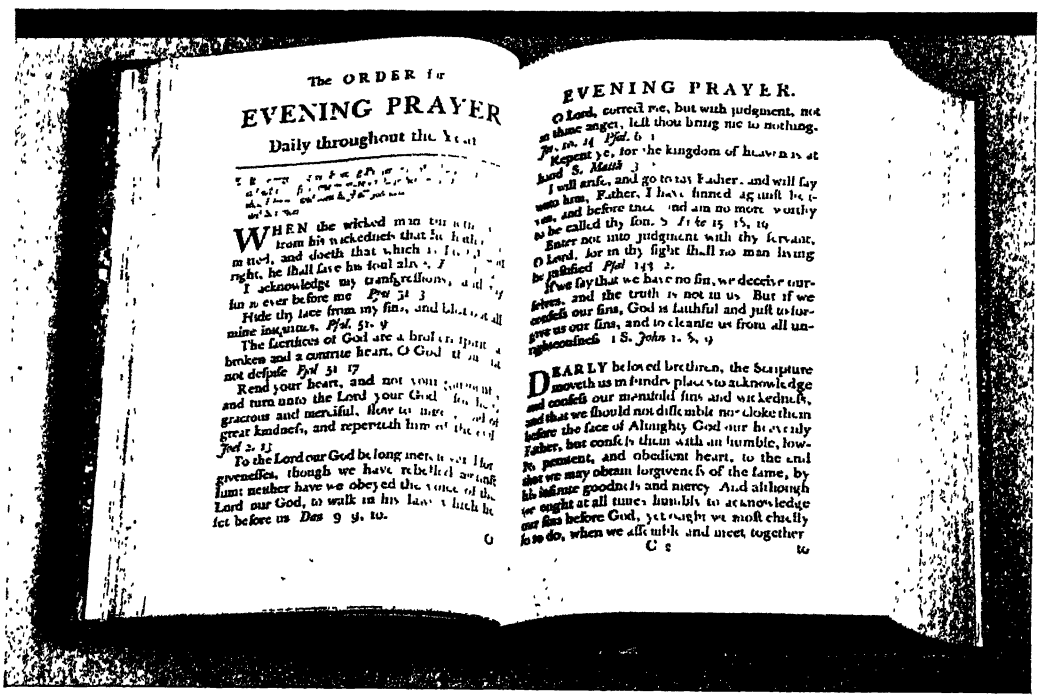
AENEIS.

BIRMINGHAMIAE.

Typis JOHANNIS BASKERVILLE.

MDCCLVII.

(B) Title-page of Baskerville's first book, the Virgil of 1757.
B. Quaritch.



The ORDER for

EVENING PRAYER

Daily throughout the Year

WHEN the wicked man turneth
from his wickedness that he hath
mured, and doeth that which is
right, he shall save his soul alive
I acknowledge my transgressions, and
sin is ever before me *Psal* 51 3
Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all
mine iniquities. *Psal.* 51. 9
The Sacrifices of God are a broken
broken and a contrite heart, O God
not despise *Psal* 51 17
Rend your heart, and not your garments,
and turn unto the Lord your God
gracious and merciful, slow to
great kindness, and repenteth him of the
Joel 2. 13
To the Lord our God belong mercies
givenesses, though we have rebelled against
him: neither have we obeyed the voice of the
Lord our God, to walk in his laws which he
set before us *Dan* 9 9. 10.

O

EVENING PRAYER.

O Lord, correct me, but with judgment, not
in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing.
Jer. 10. 24 *Psal.* 6 1
Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at
hand S. *Matth* 3 2
I will arise, and go to my Father, and will say
unto him, Father, I have sinned against hea-
ven, and before thee, and am no more worthy
to be called thy son. *Luke* 15 15, 19
Enter not into judgment with thy servant,
O Lord, for in thy sight shall no man living
be justified *Psal* 143 2.
If we say that we have no sin, we deceive our-
selves, and the truth is not in us But if we
confess our sins, God is faithful and just to for-
give us our sins, and to cleanse us from all un-
righteousness 1 S. *John* 1. 8, 9

DEARLY beloved brethren, the Scripture
moveth us in sundry places to acknowledge
and confess our manifold sins and wickedness,
and that we should not dissemble nor cloke them
before the face of Almighty God our heavenly
Father, but confess them with an humble, low-
ly, penitent, and obedient heart, to the end
that we may obtain forgiveness of the same, by
his infinite goodness and mercy And although
we ought at all times humbly to acknowledge
our sins before God, yet ought we most chiefly
so to do, when we assemble and meet together

C 2 to

(A) An opening of Baskerville's Prayer Book, 1767
B. Quaritch.

PLATE 96

Robert Dodsley, publisher and playwright, indeed never chose to print a book meanly. He was Baskerville's publisher.

John Baskerville was born in Worcestershire in 1706, at a time when the printing trade in Britain was at a low ebb, but had just become freed of the government restrictions that had been throttling it for 150 years. During Baskerville's young manhood William Caslon became the first English type designer and founder to achieve international fame.

Baskerville became a writing master in Birmingham, and then turned to japanning, a decorative art and manufacture in which his enterprise and skill made a fortune in five years. He then became interested in printing and set himself to print books better than they had ever been printed before. When he died in 1775 he had printed over fifty books, including Prayer Books and a Bible; and he had become the first English printer since Caxton whose books are known by their printer's name before their author's.

Baskerville was never a commercial printer. Like William Morris, a century later, he was a wealthy experimenter, but he was more of a technician, more of a pure typographer, and very much more of a calligrapher, than Morris. He designed his own types: it is a matter of opinion whether they were better artistically than Caslon's, but they were certainly better for the smoother papers that Baskerville also helped to introduce. As far as the design of the letter forms themselves is concerned, it has been shown,[3] from comparison with English engraved writing books of 1715 onwards, that 'Baskerville was only the first to admit into the type foundry a [design of] letter which had been clamouring outside its door for at least half a century'. Baskerville did not cut his own punches but they were cut under his close supervision in his own house. He made his own black ink and had paper specially made for him; and after printing he placed the newly-printed wet sheets [4] between hot copper plates. The gloss thus imparted to the sheets does not strike our eyes today – partly because it has probably worn off, and partly because in any case we are accustomed to so many kinds of shiny paper – but it was a great novelty to his contemporaries.

The first book Baskerville produced, after years of experimenting, was a Virgil in 1757 (Pl. 96B), which was sold by Dodsley and established his reputation. His great Folio Bible was published in 1763: to obtain the right to print it he had to get himself appointed as Printer to the University of Cambridge.

Despite support and admiration from the discerning bookmen of his day – including Benjamin Franklin, with whom his relations were long, fruitful and cordial – Baskerville's efforts did not meet with financial success, a fact possibly not surprising when we read in a contemporary letter that 'the expence of printing a sheet . . . at a common press is eighteen shillings, and at Baskerville's about three pounds ten shillings'.[5]

His books are still much to be admired today; they are severe and classical and do not rely on ornament or illustration of any kind, as did most books of his day. Yet in this he was no innovator: Tonson and Bowyer had printed books like this years before. Baskerville died in 1775, directing in his will, as a last gesture of rationalism against superstition, that he should be buried upright in non-consecrated ground in his garden at Easy Hill, outside Birmingham. 'He was not among the world's greatest printers,' wrote the great American printer D. B. Updike. 'When we look at his books we think of Baskerville; while to look at the work of Jenson is to think but of its beauty and almost to forget that it was made with hands!' [6] Yet his type, in the excellent version of it cut by the Monotype Corporation in 1923, is one of the most popular type faces for the English language today.

William Bulmer (1757–1830) and Thomas Bensley (*c.* 1760–1824) were two printers who applied some of Baskerville's lessons to commercial book production. Their books are distin-

[3] *The Monotype Recorder*, Vol. XXVI, No. 221, Sept. 1927.

[4] Hand-made paper always requires to be dampened before printing.

[5] Quoted in Straus & Dent, *John Baskerville*, London, 1907.

[6] D. B. Updike, *Printing Types*, Vol. II, p. 116, Cambridge, Mass., 1922.

guished by plain typography and careful printing on good paper, rather than by elaborate adornment, either typographical or engraved.

Bulmer was a native of Newcastle, and as a young apprentice proofed Bewick's wood-cuts; later, as a master-printer in London, he was able to give Bewick's blocks the sort of printing they deserved but had not previously received. About 1787 he set up the 'Shakespeare Press' for George Nicol, the King's bookseller who was then projecting his great edition of Shakespeare with the publisher and art dealer Boydell. The Boydell Shakespeare started appearing in January 1791, and was completed in nine folio volumes. A new type was cut for the edition by William Martin, a brother of Baskerville's foreman, developing Baskerville's ideas in type design a long way towards the not-yet-born 'modern' face. The volumes were illustrated with engravings after paintings by Westall, Hamilton, Smirke, Stothard, etc. It was a noble eighteenth-century monument; and a set still commands a fair price in antiquarian bookshops.

Numerous other fine works were issued by Bulmer from the Shakespeare Press, which are now much collected.

Although Bensley's life was shorter than Bulmer's, his imprint extends over a considerably larger period. His typography was more delicate and subtle than Bulmer's, and his books for that reason perhaps more attractive. In Bensley's workshop the German inventor Koenig developed his steam cylinder press, to which *The Times* went over for its printing in 1814.

The efforts of all the printers so far mentioned were consciously directed towards fine, but also large and expensive, book production, requiring wealthy patronage. At this time also, and for this sort of market, another fashion began: that of the colour-plate book. It had always been possible to print in colour from wood blocks in register, but the technique was difficult and no artist had exploited it. It was also possible to hand-colour prints from either wood blocks or copper plates. Now a new process, that of aquatint, was developed, which led to a series of books which must rank as among the most beautiful things ever made in Britain, and which no subsequent kind of colour printing has ever surpassed.

Aquatint is a kind of etching. A grain is laid on a copper plate which, when printed, gives the effect of a water-colour wash; hence 'aqua-tinta'. It was most useful for reproducing, in books, the scenes from nature being newly discovered by the romantic revivalists and amateurs of the picturesque. The first book of aquatints published in England was Paul Sandby's *Twelve Views in South Wales*, 1775, which very quickly had its successors and imitators. At first the aquatint engravings were printed in black or sepia only, then in a second colour; then the plates, printed in

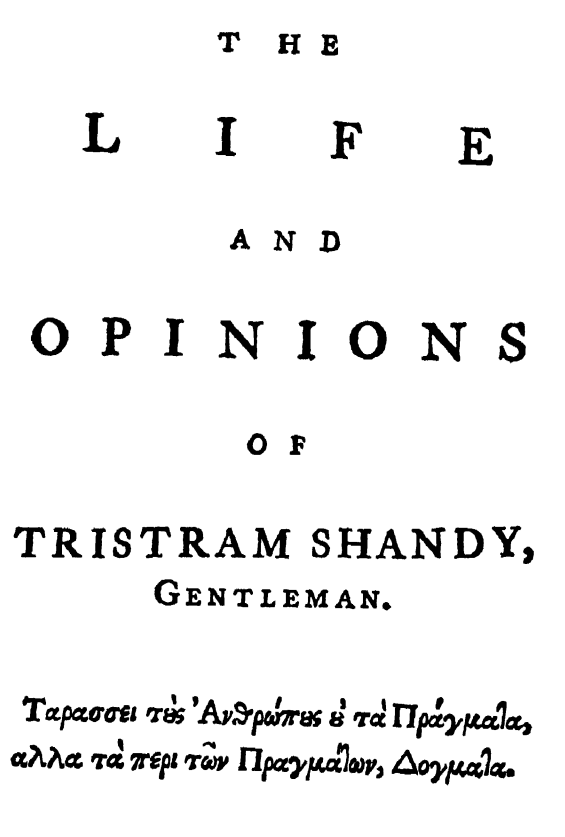

THE
LIFE
AND
OPINIONS
OF
TRISTRAM SHANDY,
GENTLEMAN.
Ταρασσει τους Ανθρώπους ου τα Πράγματα, αλλα τα περι των Πραγματων, Δογματα.
VOL. I.
1760.

Fig. 1. (*right*) The title-page of the first edition of *Tristram Shandy*, 1760. (See page 171.)

either one or two colours, were coloured in water-colour by hand. What is known to collectors today as a colour-plate book of this period is a book containing plates, either etched, engraved, or aquatinted, and subsequently coloured by hand.

The publisher whose name is chiefly associated with colour-plate books is the versatile Rudolph Ackermann (1764–1834). Born in Germany, he came to England to seek his fortune as a coach painter and designer, and in 1795 he opened a print shop. As a designer and painter of coaches he must have reached the top of his profession, for he prepared the heraldic designs for Lord Nelson's funeral car. But it is as a publisher that he is better known. In 1808 he began to issue, in monthly parts, *The Microcosm of London*, with coloured aquatint plates in which the architecture was drawn by A. W. Pugin and the figures by Rowlandson. The collaboration was brilliantly successful, artistically and commercially, and was followed up by similar works on Westminster Abbey, the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, the Public Schools, etc., etc. One of Ackermann's most successful and famous books was *The Tour of Dr Syntax*, with vigorous coloured etchings by Rowlandson. To produce the editions of hand-coloured plates, armies of colourists had to be employed, usually girls; each individual painted in one colour only and then passed the sheet to the next.

Many fine colour-plate books were produced by other publishers. Among the most beautiful and famous are W. Daniell's *Voyage Round Great Britain* (8 vols., 1814–25); W. H. Pyne's *Royal Residences* (3 vols., 1819); J. Malton's *Views in the City of Dublin* (*c.* 1818); and J. Jenkins' *Naval Achievements* (1817).

Other important categories of colour-plate book were the Flower and Bird Books of which, however, the most important were published later than our period. In these books were published and illustrated the discoveries of scientific exploration sponsored by wealthy collectors, societies and Governments.

The great period of the aquatint was roughly between 1800 and 1830. It was killed by lithographic colour-printing, made inevitable by the needs of mass-production.

The colour-plate books, although many of them were issued in monthly parts, were destined then as now for collectors and people of wealth. They were mostly large quartos, usually prefaced with a List of Subscribers headed by royalty. And the taste for bulk in books persisted even among the reading public. It is interesting to note that the Waverley novels, which began publication in 1814, and were extremely successful, were all first issued in 2 or 3 volume editions.

But not all people want large books and not all people can afford them. Charles Whittingham (1767–1840) was one of the first printers to feel in this way and to print small, inexpensive books well. From 1790 he concentrated on small books and was soon publishing as well as printing them. 'Whittingham's Cabinet Library', a series of miniature books which first began appearing about 1814, are the forerunners of innumerable series catering for the massive new reading public which was just being born. Whittingham did not print colour-plate books but he excelled at printing wood-engravings: notable examples of this kind are his Northcote's *Fables*, 1829, and *The Tower Menagerie*, 1829.

In 1810 all type was still being cast by hand and set by hand; and although newspapers were soon to be printed on cylinder presses, all books were printed then, and for many years to come, on hand presses, on hand-made paper. But wholesale mechanization and technical development in every branch of the printing trade were in the air.

Fig. 2. An ornamental alphabet, designed and cut by Richard Austin in 1796, now known as 'Fry's Ornamented'.

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A SELECT INDEX OF CONTEMPORARY PUBLICATIONS MENTIONED